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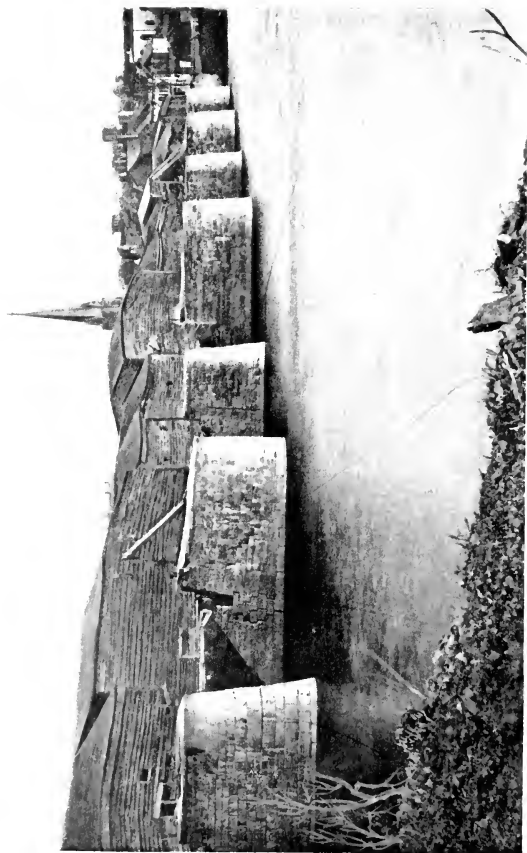












*The Old Glensville Bridge.*

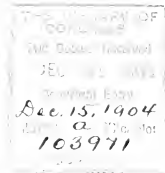
BY  
GEORGE S. <sup>Shaw</sup> ROBERTS



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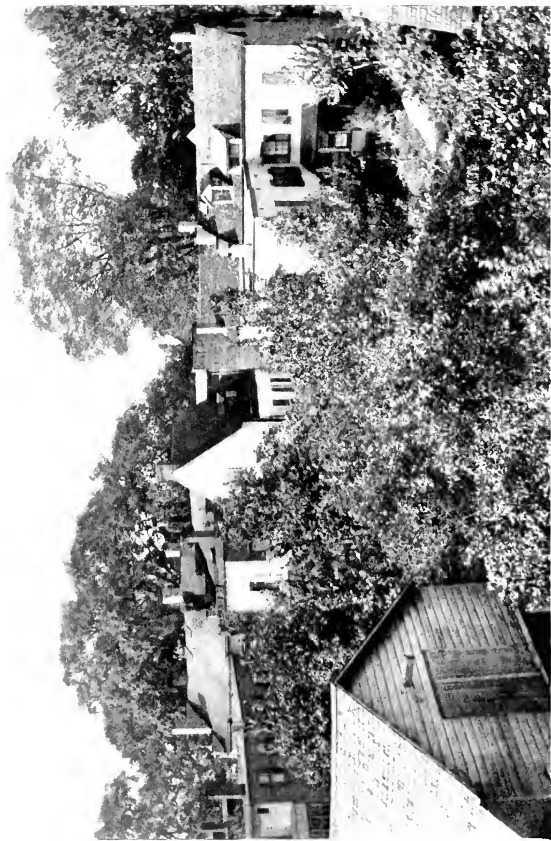
## FORE-WORD.

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There are a great many interesting facts, traditions, anecdotes and reminiscences relative to Schenectady, which are buried from the general public in specialized histories, genealogies, biographies and in the memories of the older residents. It is the purpose of this book to present such facts, traditions and reminiscences as have been dug out from the dry, if more profound and scholarly, productions of authors who were masters on the subjects upon which they wrote. Schenectady is so rich in such material that it has been possible to treat the subjects only partially and casually.

That so many pictures of ancient buildings, dwellings and old time views are presented to the readers is entirely due to the kindness of Mr. William A. Wick. This collection of ancient landmarks that have been torn down and of those still standing, has been obtained by Mr. Wick at considerable labor and expense. That the collection is unique is patent to all who see the pictures.





*View from Rear of Court House, Showing Ancient Dutch Peak Building.*



# OLD SCHENECTADY.

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## Chapter I. The Settlement.

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### MEANING OF SCHENECTADY.



IT IS an odd fact, frequently remarked upon by interested outsiders, that almost none of the descendants of the old Dutch settlers of Schenectady have any knowledge of the origin or meaning of the name of that city. But if the interested outsider remains in Schenectady long, he soon ceases to wonder at the lack of knowledge for he finds that the rather stolid Dutch mind is little given to speculation or investigation; that with them if a thing is, it is, and that is enough for all purposes of trade; trade and the consequent accumulation of dollars being the chief thought among them.

Schenectady no doubt means, "beyond the pine plains" and "Schonowe," a name given to the locality in the earliest days, before and at the time of the settlement, means "the great flats."

The authority for these definitions is the Rev. W. M. Beachamp, S. D., an Episcopal clergyman who devoted many years to the Iriquios, or Five Nations, their language and customs. He was so highly regarded by the Indian survivors of the Five Nations that he was adopted by them and, as a man, bore about the same relation to them that the late Mrs. Converse did as a woman.

"Beyond the pine plains" did not apply to what is now the site of Schenectady, any more than to any other place similarly

situated; in fact, it was first applied to Albany. The immediate vicinity of Schenectady on the north and west was extraordinarily fertile river flats without trees of any kind. This was described by the Indians as "Schonowe," or "the great flats," when translated. Any other great flats would have been described by the Indians by the same word.

To the east and south of the great flats were vast sandy plains covered with a forest of immense pines. Between Schenectady and Albany was a sandy plain, pine covered, which ended at Albany abruptly and equally so at Schenectady. If an Indian was traveling toward the east over the regular trail, when he arrived at the Hudson, on the site of Albany, he called it Schenectady, that is, "the place beyond the pine plains." Other Indians, traveling west over the trail, finally arrived at Schenectady, which was also "the place beyond the pine plains." It was this place beyond the pine plains, at the western end of the trail joining the Hudson and Mohawk rivers, which has retained the descriptive name of Schenectady.

Another more poetic meaning is given by Major J. W. MacMurray, editor of Pearson's History of the Schenectady Patent. The authority he quotes says: "The usual signification attributed to this word, is believed to be erroneous having been derived, not from the Mohawk, but from the Mohegan language. In the former tongue—the Mohawk—he says, 'Gaun-ho-ha' means 'door'; 'S'Gaun-ho-ha' means 'the door' and 'Hac-ta-tie', means 'without.' These two words combined form, 'S'Gaun-ho-ha-hac-ta-tie,' this abbreviated and written, 'S'Guan-hac-ta-tie' means 'without the door.' 'S'Guan-ho-ha' appears also in another name given to the town by the Mohawks at an earlier date. \* \* \* \* by a conveyance to Van Curler the land is named by the Indians, 'Schon-o-we,' identical probably with 'S'Guan-ho-ha,' in sound and signification."

It would seem to require a large supply of Christian Science faith to believe that these two words are the same in sound and meaning.

To arrive at the idea which the Indians wished to convey by the word, "S'Gaun-hac-ta-tie," "without the door," something must be known about the Iriquois or Five Nations.

The Five Nations occupied chiefly the middle portion of New York. This confederation was composed of the Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas and Senecas. Their territory extended from the Mohawk river at Schenectady on the east, to Niagara river on the west and was spoken of in their picturesque and figurative language as the "Long house," or, sometimes as the "Cabin." The location of the Mohawks on the river flats between the high hills of what is now Glenville and Rotterdam, was called "The Door of the House." As the Mohawks were the most powerful of the tribes and were the furthest east, it was to them that embassies from other tribes, or the white settlers, were sent. To the west of the Mohawks, at about the center of the State, were the Oneidas, Onondagas and Cayugas, while at the extreme west, on Niagara river, were the Senecas.

The attention paid to form and ceremony was shown when the Governor of Canada attempted to make a treaty with the Senecas by sending an ambassador to the Senecas directly, instead of by way of the "Door." The Mohawks resented this as an indignity and a slight, so they sent word to the Governor that, while they were "The Door of the House" he had entered by the "Chimney," and he would better look out or he would get smoke in his eyes.

It is a tradition that for many generations, perhaps centuries, the site of the chief village of the Mohawks was the spot where Schenectady is and their location being the door of the house, they called their village "S'Gaun-ho-ha," meaning "the door." When their chief village was moved to the west, where Fort Hunter now is, their old site was no longer "the door," but "without the door," so "ho-ha" was dropped and "hac-ta-tie," meaning "without," was added to the first syllable making "S'Gaun-hac-ta-tie"—"Without the Door."

Danker and Sluyter, in their journal of 1680, make a very pretty play upon the word, or else it is a curious coincidence.

The immediate neighborhood of Schenectady was, and still is very beautiful. The scenery is of the kind which is peaceful and restful and the weary traveler or pioneer must indeed have been impressed, when the pines suddenly ceased, and he beheld the lovely valley. So these old boys in their journal describe the place as, "This Schooneetendeel," which by a very slight stretch of imagination is similar to the eye and ear to the Indian word. Now in the Dutch, "schoon" means, "beautiful;" "eeten," from "achten," meaning, "esteemed" or "valuable;" "deel," or "del," meaning, "a portion of land," especially a valley; hence, a beautiful, fertile valley.

Some of the spellings of Schenectady show that the early settlers were probably of the same opinion as was President Andy Johnson who, when called to account for his faulty orthography replied, that he regarded a person as being something of a fool who did not know enough to spell a word in more than one way. The Dutch found the Indian gutturals hard to pronounce and much harder to express in letters, so when the spelling had to be done by ear and not by actual knowledge, it was often very much off. Besides the original Indian word and its Indian corruption already given, Arent Van Curler, the pioneer of Schenectady and the country roundabout, made it, "Schan-ech-stede." An official document of 1664 gives, both "Sch-augh-stede" and "Sch-auech-stede." It is probably from the former spelling that a local tribe of the Order of Red Men gets, "Schaugh-naugh-ta-da." An Indian deed of 1672 for the township gives, "Schan-heeh-ta-de," which was probably as near as the Dutchman who drew the deed could get to the sound of the word when pronounced by the Indians. In 1675, Sheriff Cobes, of Albany, dropped the second "h" from the spelling in the deed and strangely enough, Governor Stuyvesant in an order written in 1663 spelled the word exactly as it is now spelled. In 1678, Governor Andross, in a proclamation prohibiting trade with "Scon-ex-ta-dy," in the last two syllables followed the spelling of Governor Stuyvesant and made a mussy of the two first syllables, probably through an effort to

be phonetic. Morse's Geography of 1789 gives "Skenectady." In 1693, the Rev. John Miller, a man of liberal education, gave "Scan-ec-ta-de;" in 1695 the inventory of the estate of Hendrick Gardinier, gives, "Shinn-ectady;" Lieutenant Hunt, Commander of the Fort in 1696, spelled it, "Schon-ac-ta-dy," the nearest phonetic spelling found; and in 1802, when the people had become well acquainted with the Mohawk language, it was spelled in a petition, "Schon-hec-ta-dy."

Of the seventy-one different spellings to be found in old documents, only once is the word begun with a C and that was done by the Rev. Dr. Johnson who wrote to Archbishop Secker, of London, in 1759, about the building of an Episcopal Church—St. George's—in "Chenectedi."

### THE OFF-SHOOT.

It is a good thing to be well born and a better when honest, broad-minded qualities and principles of good citizenship, thrift and independence are inherited with the blue-blood. Of such were the early settlers of Schenectady.

The men who settled Schenectady were unique in the New World, as settlers. Their largeness of mind was equalled by unselfishness; their thrift for the present by their thoughtfulness for those who would come after them. Their pronouns were "We" and "Our," not "I" and "Mine."

Schenectady was not a child of Albany, notwithstanding the fact that those who settled it were from that place. It was to be rid of Albany and the intolerable monopoly of the Dutch West India Company and its self-assumed right to interfere with the inherent rights of individuals, and of the Patroons, men who were granted vast tracts of valuable land for the purpose of colonization, but who in reality became rivals of the West India Company in trade monopoly and oppression of the individual, that the men who became the Fifteen Original Proprietors of Schenectady cut loose from such oppression and formed a new settlement where all should have equal right to buy and sell and live.

While their condition was greatly improved, they did not entirely free themselves from the monopoly of Albany till 1727.

Led by Arent Van Curler—a man of such honesty, justice and fearlessness that his name became a synonym with the Iriquois and Indians of Canada for all that appealed to them as being the best—they went to Schenectady (the place “Beyond the Pine Plains”) and purchased from the Iriquois, or Five Nations, “Schonowe,” or the “Great Flats.” Here on the site of the present city of Schenectady they built a village and on the great flats they had their farms. The township included 128 square miles and a certain portion of this was given to the original settlers; the remainder, known as common lands was held in trust for the community then existing and for those who should come after them. These men, of their own will, assumed the titles of Trustees in accord with their idea of “We” and “Our” instead of “I” and “Mine” and later, when one of them tried to set upon a claim of personal ownership in the common lands, he and his heirs were fought to the end as determinedly as only Dutchmen could fight. This idea of all living for one and one for all was the result of deliberate purpose, not of chance. They wished to establish a settlement in which all should be equal and they realized their wish.

Although this first permanent settlement was not made till 1662, Van Curler was more or less familiar with the locality for twenty years before, for he first saw it in 1642. Even then there were a few daring hunters and trappers who had made homes for themselves widely separated one from the other. There seems to be no record of who they were, where they came from or what became of them.

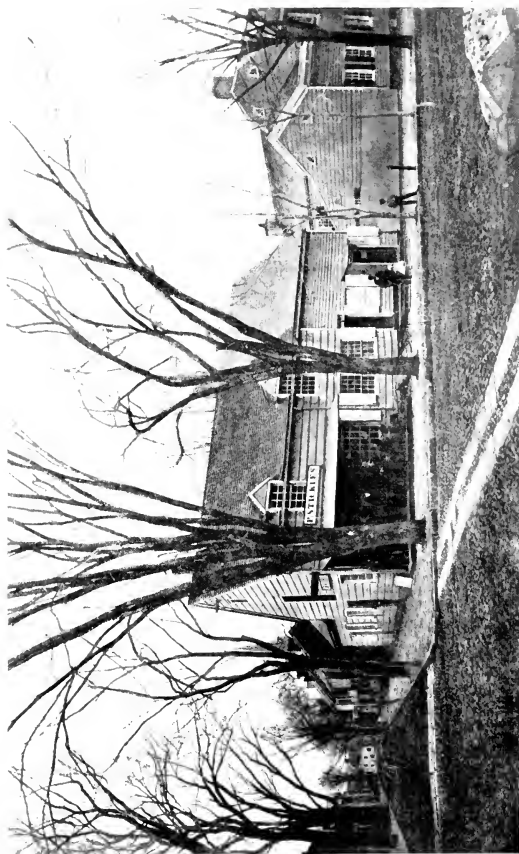
The desire of the settlers to have the land surveyed and their portions allotted was not realized till two years after the settlement, for the authorities at Albany were jealous and fearful that some of the profits flowing into their pockets would be stopped at the new settlement. In April, 1662, Van Curler had written his second request that Jacques Cortelyou be authorized to make

the survey. This request was weakly denied by the Director General on the ground that before the settlement could be formed and the land surveyed, at least twenty families should compose the settlement and that they should promise not to trade with the Indians. In May, 1663, Governor Stuyvesant made another excuse for delaying the survey, this time on the ground that he had been informed that some of the settlers had dared to sell liquor to the Indians against his express orders to the contrary. He ordered Cortelyou not to survey land for any one in the new settlement unless he signed a pledge, drawn by the Governor, not to trade in any manner with the Indians. They were also to agree to pay, without opposition, should they violate their pledge, fifty beaver skins for the first offence; one hundred for the second, and for the third to voluntarily forfeit all their lands. This reply was talked over by Van Curler and the other fourteen proprietors and they decided to sign it. Still the Governor delayed. He took on a highly religious and fatherly tone. He feared that the transportation of valuable goods by wagons so many miles from Albany would cause the Indians to attack the wagon trains, kill the settlers and steal the goods and mistreat their women. Finally, after Alexander Lindsey Glen, William Teller and Harmon Vedder presented a petition on April 17, 1664, for a survey, it was granted.

#### LOCATION OF PROPRIETORS.

The area laid out as a village by the Fifteen Original Proprietors of Schenectady, included about twenty acres. The streets were broad and were laid out at right angles, with four hundred feet between parallel streets. Each of these blocks was divided into four lots of two hundred feet. This made each lot a corner lot, with frontage on two streets. Besides the village lots, each proprietor was given a farm on the flats or islands; a pasture to the east of the village; and a garden to the south of the village.

The apportionment of the village lots, according to records, was as follows:



*North-East Corner Ferry and Union Streets.*



Arent Van Corlear—or Van Curler—was on the north-east corner of Union and Church streets, where the old Union Classical Institute building—now the Mohawk Club—stands.

Philip Hendrikse Brouwer was on the north-west corner of State and Church streets. He died, leaving no children; so the name is extinct.

Alexander Lindsey Glen was on the west side of Washington avenue, extending from the northerly line of Union street down toward Front street.

Simon Volkertse Veeder was on the north-west corner of State and Ferry streets, diagonally opposite the Y. M. C. A. building.

Ahasueras Teunis Van Valsen was on the south side of State street, at its junction with Mill lane. The property extended back on the lowland toward the canal, and included about twenty-five acres. He was the miller of the community, and as he was killed in the "massacre" of 1690, without children, the name is extinct.

Peter Adrience Van Woggenum, also called Soegemakelyk, was on the south-west corner of Union and Church streets, opposite the old Union Classical Institute property.

Cornelius Antonisen Van Slyck's location is not known. He married a daughter of a Mohawk chief and was adopted by the tribe. He was held in high esteem by the Mohawks and by his white associates. His descendants may boast of fine old Holland blood and of much older American blood. The Mohawks were fierce and cruel and the gentlemen of Spain, who managed the Inquisition, were crafty and cruel; but the former possessed qualities which, in Europe, made princes and great nobles of those who possessed them.

This Indian wife was somewhat remarkable and was so highly esteemed by the Dutch of her day, that the following paraphrase from Dunker's and Sluyter's journal of 1680, will be interesting.

"I was surprised to find so far in the woods"—the place so far in the woods was Schenectady—"a person who showed so much

love for God. She told me her story from the beginning and how it was that she became a Christian." Her father and mother were full-blooded Mohawk Indians, who instinctively hated the Christians and their teachings, and her mother would never listen to anything about them. This girl lived with her parents and brothers and sisters. Sometimes she went with her mother to the settlements to trade, and sometimes the people from the settlements went to the place, where she lived, to trade. Some of the whites took a fancy to the girl as she seemed to be more of a Christian, in many ways, than an Indian. When they proposed to take her to the settlement and bring her up according to white ideas her mother would not hear of it and the little girl was at first afraid. After repeated visits by the settlers and requests to take her to the settlements the little girl discovered that the Christians were not all that her mother had told her they were. She seemed to be naturally drawn toward Christianity, the love of God and of Christ. This caused her family to hate and abuse her. Finally they drove her out and she went to the white settlers, who had been so kind to her. She was gladly welcomed and lived for a long time with a woman who taught her to read and write and household duties. When she had learned the Dutch language she studied the New Testament with such good purpose that she made a confession of faith and was baptized.

Gerrit Bancker was on the south-west corner of Union street and Washington avenue, opposite the residence of D. Cady Smith, on Washington avenue.

William Teller was on the south-west corner of Union street and Washington avenue. His lot included the lot of Judge Jackson, on Washington avenue, and of W. Scott Hunter, on Union street. He was the first of the name to come to the Colony from Holland, in 1639, in the service of the West India Company. He was possessed of ample means and great influence.

Bastian De Winter was on the south-east corner of Union and Church streets, where the residence of Franklin McClellan—formerly the property of Richard Fuller—now stands, across Union street from the First Reformed Church.

Arent Andries Bradt was on the north-east corner of State street and Washington avenue, where the apartment house, "The Alexandria," stands, opposite the Freeman House. As Bradt died before the apportionment, Bastian De Winter's name, as attorney for the widow, appears on the apportionment.

Pieter Danelse Van Olinda's location is not known. He married Hillitie, one of the half-breed daughters of Van Slyck. She owned large tracts of land, by gift from the Mohawks.

Jan Barentse Wemp—later spelled Wemple—was on the west side of Washington avenue where is now the hotel called the Freeman House.

Peter Jacobse Borsboom was on the south-west corner of Front street and Washington avenue, where is now the residence of John Keyes Paige. He was survived by several daughters, but only one son, who died, unmarried; so the name is extinct.

Jaques Cornelius Van Slyck was on the little public square, between State and Water streets at the place where the bronze tablet stands. He kept one of the two inns of the village.

### INCORPORATED AS BOROUGH AND CITY.

The settlement of Schenectady was due to a desire on the parts of a few men to be rid of the arbitrary power and oppression of the powers in Aibany. That they succeeded in making a permanent settlement, was ever a cause for jealousy on the part of Albany; and the Schenectady settlers and their successors were frequently made to feel in many ways the littleness of Albany's spite.

Up to 1665 Schenectady was a part of Albany. In that year, the war with the French being over and the resulting prosperity beginning to be felt, Schenectady became the most active and important shipping center north of New York, for it was here, as has been mentioned in another chapter, that the really great trade between the west and east was most felt, Schenectady being the river port for it all. This brought a great number of outsiders to Schenectady, many of them being of a reckless class,

especially the river men who worked the batteaux and durham boats. These latter were of the same style as the canal boat of to-day, only they were broader and sharper at the bow and had a mast rigged with large, square sails.

In order that these persons might be kept within bounds, the people of Schenectady desired a government of their own, independent of Albany. With this idea in view a petition was presented to the Governor, on April 19, 1763, asking for a charter. At the time Schenectady secured freedom of trade, in 1727, Albany raised heaven and earth to prevent it, but without success, and now that it was trying to secure independence, Albany raised the other place in the hope of preventing that. On the second of the next month Albany presented a counter petition to the Governor. A charter was granted on October 22, 1765, which made Schenectady a borough and created the following offices which were filled by the following citizens: Mayor, Isaac Vrooman; Recorder, John Duncan; Aldermen, Jacobus Van Slyck, John Glen, Jr., John Sanders, Daniel Campbell, John Visgar, J. B. Van Eps; Assistants—Garret Lansing, Rynier Myndertse, Ryer Schermerhorn, Tobias Ten Eyck, Cornelius Cuyler, Hermanus Bradt; Town Clerk—Thomas Mellworth; Treasurer—Christopher Yates; Assessors—Isaac M. Merselis and Isaac Swits; Collector—Barent S. Veeder; High Constable—Richard Collins; Sub-constables—Thomas Murray, Hermanus Terwilliger, John Van Vorst, Charles Dennison, James Dunlop, John Wasson, Jr.; Sergeant of the Mace—Alexander Campbell.

The mayor, town clerk and recorder were appointed by the Governor and the other officers were elected by the people, with the exceptions of the high-constable and treasurer, who were appointed by the mayor and council, and the sergeant, who was appointed by the mayor. The laws of the borough were made by the mayor, or recorder and three or more aldermen or assistants. The voters were freemen, who had been born in the borough, or who had resided there for ten years previous to the granting of the charter, or such had been granted the privilege by the council.

Only freemen were permitted to "use any art, trade, or mystery" or to sell goods at retail. The charter was elaborate in detail, more like a city charter than a borough's and there is no record that the mayor and council met after the first time when they took the oath of office, but the right and power to meet and make laws was there and that satisfied the people. By an oversight, the charter did not settle an old dispute in regard to the control of the common lands by the original settlers or trustees and their successors, so the trustees appointed by the will of Arent Bradt still controlled the town's property. The interest and excitement of the prelude to the Revolution settled all local disagreement of this nature.

After the war had given Independence to the Colonies, the freemen and trustees arrived at an agreement which culminated on March 26, 1798, in the incorporation of Schenectady as a city, and the control of the public lands was in the hands of the mayor, aldermen and commonalty. The city contained four wards. The first was that portion lying between Union street and the Mohawk river; the second was south of Union street to the limits of the original grant and both wards were bounded on the east by the line of the original grant; the third ward was the present town of Rotterdam; and the fourth was the present town of Glenville. The erection of these wards into towns has been described elsewhere.

#### COUNTY INCORPORATED.

Up to March 7, 1809, Schenectady was a part of Albany County, a fact that was a cause of irritation to the people of Schenectady, but on that date in that year, the discord ceased for the western portion of Albany County, lying entirely outside of the Manor of Rensselaerwyck, was set off and given all the rights and privileges that the other counties of the State possessed, being entitled to two members of assembly. The County's first senior judge was the Hon. Gerret S. Veeder, a lineal descendant

of the original proprietor, Simon Valkertse Veeder, and the first surrogate, Hon. W. J. Teller, was a lineal descendant of the early settler, William Teller.

In addition to the territory already mentioned from the earliest days, included in Schenectady, (the towns of Glenville, Rotterdam, Duanesburg and Princetown), the town of Niskayuna was added.

Niskayuna was settled by people from Albany at about the same time Schenectady was and for the same reason, to be out of the control of the officials of the great trading company and the Patroons, who kept the Indian trade and its profits for themselves. Niskayuna was set off from that portion of Albany County lying within the western limits of Watervliet. The names of the early settlers of Niskayuna were, Krygier (now Cregier) Clute, Van Vranken, Pearse, Vedder, Groot, Tymersen, and Van Brookhoven. Most notable among these pioneers was Captain Martin Krygier, a soldier of Holland and one of Governor Stuyvesant's most trusted friends and officers, the man whom he chose for important missions requiring diplomacy. In 1653 Captain Krygier was the first burgomaster of New Amsterdam. When, after taking an active part in the affairs of the Colony and in many fights and battles, he decided to retire from public service, he settled on the banks of the Mohawk "where the Indians carried their bark canoes over the stones," in Niskayuna. He died in 1712 honored and revered by all who knew him.

Princetown was made a township in March, 1798. It was and is a long narrow strip of land and was made up of a grant of the original Schenectady Patent which had been granted to the old Dutch Reformed Church, of Schenectady, and from land patents owned by George Ingoldsby and Aaron Bradt in 1737. These original owners sold to William Corey, who affected a settlement, for many years known as Coreybush. Corey sold to John Duncan. The town was named in honor of John Prince, a resident of Schenectady who represented Albany County—before the forming of Schenectady County—in the Assembly.

## Chapter II.

### Trade, Protection, Customs.

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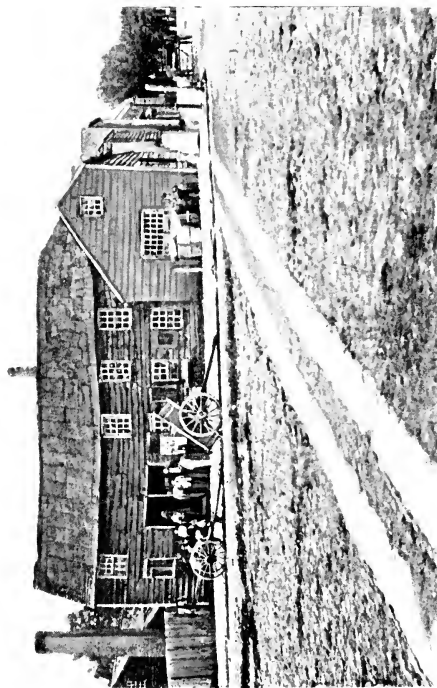
#### TRADE.



FROM the first settlement down to 1727 the settlers of Schenectady were prohibited from trading in any manner, especially with the Indians. This was by order of the Governor and Council of Albany, who intended to keep the rich profits from Indian trade to themselves. They feared that the more advantageous location of Schenectady for trade with the Indians would reduce the fastness of the fortunes which were being made by a favored few in Albany.

The settlers as a whole remonstrated against this order and Van Curler added a personal letter to the Governor in which he said, among other things: "It would be lamentable were the settlers and their posterity to remain forever under the ban of slavery and be excluded from bartering their bread, milk or the produce of their farms for a beaver, so as to be able to purchase some covering for their bodies and their houses."

Governor Stuyvesant and his crowd loved the wealth which was pouring in to their pockets too well to be moved by such just appeals. Of course the people of Schenectady, who had cut loose from Albany to be rid of just such arbitrariness, were indignant and it was not so very long before individuals began to trade secretly with the Indians. This fact, or a rumor of it, having been brought to the attention of Governor Lovelace in 1669, he issued an order prohibiting trade with the Indians at Schenectady. The monumental selfishness of this order is shown by the wording in one part of it where the Governor says: "\* \* \* Which does and hereafter may tend to the ruin and destruction of the trade



*Clute & Reagles Blacksmith Shop on State Street, between Barrett and Lafayette Streets.*



in Albany, which is of far greater consideration and benefit to the Government, than would be the private profit of particular persons." His reference to the "benefit to the Government" was a play to his equals and superiors and perhaps, an ointment to his conscience for playing the part of an arbitrary, greedy tyrant. In 1671 he authorized Captain Sylvester Salisbury, Commandant of the Fort in Albany, to search houses in Schenectady for furs and other Indian goods and to punish such persons as had them in their possession.

But the Dutch, like the Irish, were "hard to keep down," especially the Schenectady Dutch. They defied the porcine officials of Albany and traded secretly and profitably so, in 1678, Governor Andros took a hand in the matter and issued what would be called to-day an injunction. It was that no wagons or carts of any kind should pass between Albany and Schenectady without a permit granted by the magistrates and that even then no passengers or merchandise should be carried. This original "government by injunction" was in force for three months.

There is an infinitesimal bit of irony in that fact that in 1904 the wealth and trade of which Albany boasted in 1678 has traveled across the "Great Sand Plains," not in wagons and carts, but by steam and electricity.

The sheriffs from Albany made visits to Schenectady for a number of years to search houses for contraband goods and they met with resistance frequently and several prominent citizens were arrested and fined for resistance. These men who defied unjust laws, made for the few who possessed power and wealth, exhibited exactly the same spirit—which is the spirit of the American of to-day who has inherited his citizenship from Colonial ancestors—as was shown by their Anglo-Saxon brothers when they threw the tea into Boston harbor. They were Mindert Wemp, Reynier Schaets, Gysbert Garretsen Van Brakel, and Adam Vrooman. This was in 1686. Four years later, in 1690, Adam Vrooman put up such a stiff and courageous fight in his house, for the safety of his loved ones, that he excited the

admiration of the Indians and their French friends to the extent that they promised no harm should be done him if he would surrender. For a wonder the promise was kept.

All these years the regulation of trade was in the hands of the Governor and Council, but in 1686, when Albany received its city charter, the Magistrates took a hand in the monopoly business; the "protection of infant industries;" and went far beyond the Governor and Council. They passed laws in protection of trade—for Albany—not even dreamed of by the advocates for the protection of America's infant industries of 1904.

The charter gave to Albany the enjoyment of the privilege and advantage of having within its own walls the sole management of the entire trade with the Indians north, west and east of Albany. They could not monopolize the atmosphere, the sunshine nor the rain and that was the only reason they did not do so. The fine for violating this Dutch ancestor of twentieth-century Protection, was £20, of which one-third went to the mayor; another to the mayor, aldermen and commonalty; and the third to the person suing for the same. Traders with the Indians were prohibited from importing such goods as they could "swap" with the Indians for pelts and the fine for doing so was £40 on every £100 of their value. In 1701, Robert Livingston wrote to the Board of Trade proposing that the people should be encouraged to extend the settlements into the country by granting them free trade with the Indians, without being imposed upon by the City of Albany or any other city or town. He called the board's attention to the fact that Albany had always done everything possible to discourage settlement because it was feared their monopoly of the Indian trade would be somewhat reduced by such settlements. He told the board that the Indian trade would induce persons to settle further inland and that this would enhance the value of the land which would not otherwise be increased in value for many years. The Albany sheriffs kept up their searches; tabooed goods were frequently found and fines were as frequently imposed.

In 1723 the "worm" in Schenectady turned. In that year J. E. Wendell and Robert Roseboom informed the Albany authorities that Johannes Myndertse, of Schenectady, had taken Indians into his house on the corner of Mill lane and State street, who had beaver and other skins with them. Myndertse was arrested, taken to Albany and said that the information was correct. He was fined £10 and committed to jail till the fine should be paid. Habeas Corpus proceedings were begun and he brought suit against the Aldermen of Albany for trespass and false imprisonment. In 1727 the Supreme Court decided in his favor and the aldermen were out of pocket £41-0-3 for damages and costs. Schenectady had demonstrated that the principle of free trade meant greater general prosperity for the Colony than protection for a few wealthy monopolists.

In modern parlance, "the lid was always off," all over the Colony, so far as the free selling of rum to the Indians was concerned. This was a grave fault of the early Dutch settlers and Schenectady was not an exception to the rule. In a letter on the subject in 1687, Colonel Peter Schuyler told the Governor that the selling of liquor to the Indians was a great evil and kept them from being about their business "as they stayed at Schenectady continually drinking." Even some of the most prominent Indian Sachems took the matter up with the Colonial authorities in an effort to stop the traffic in liquor with the Indians as it was demoralizing them and making them quarrelsome.

The Dutch trader liked the business very well for if he could exchange rum for pelts or valuable furs and at the same time so confuse the mind of the Indian with the rum that he would give ten times its value in skins, so much the better. The Colony tried to stop the sale but without much success. The trouble was then as it now is, that the sale of liquor was very profitable.



*Site of the Old Fort.*

## FORTS.

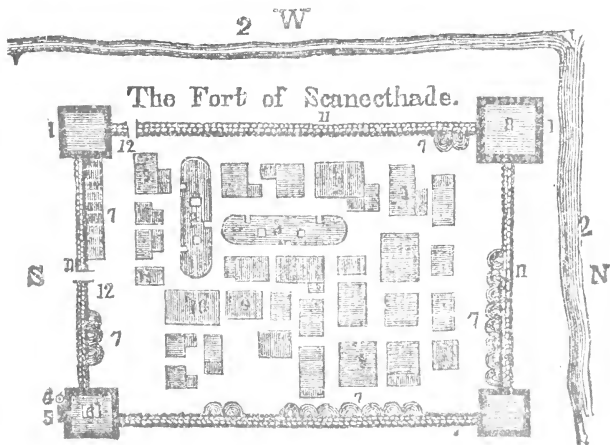
The first protection from Indians and other enemies at Schenectady was a stockade, which was, no doubt, erected as soon after the houses for the pioneers, as possible. This stockade was made of the trunks of the immense pines which were in great number then. They were twenty feet long and were set close together in a trench about the outer limits of the settlement. Where they touched they were hewn flat and then pinned at the top together, the tops being cut to a point to add to the difficulty of scaling. These great posts were of sufficient thickness to be bullet-proof, to the bullets of 1662 at least, and of course arrows were harmless, unless shot over the top.

The stockade surrounding Schenectady inclosed the original four squares bounded by State and Front streets; Washington avenue and Ferry street, the great posts being placed on the outer line of those streets, so that the street proper was between the stockade and the front lines of the four blocks. In those days and for many years thereafter, Front street did not bend to the north at Church street as it does now, but was in a line at right angles to Church street and intersected Ferry street where the angle now is in Ferry street, opposite the northern boundary of St. George's Church yard. This stockade was entered by gates at Church and Front streets and at Church and State streets.

The first blockhouse was at the junction of Front street and Washington avenue, that being the point which would be first attacked by Indians, who would approach the settlement from the river. After the destruction of the settlement by the French and Indians in 1690, another block house was erected on land belonging to Isaac Swits—who was taken prisoner to Canada by the Indians—west of the end of Union street, that is, Union street and Washington avenue. This was in 1690. It may be stated incidentally that Swits returned a year later to find his property

pre-empted and used as a fort, and that it was not till 1708 that a grant was made to his son of 1,000 acres of land in Niskayuna in payment.

The fort erected after the burning was a very large affair and a carefully executed map of it was drawn in 1695 by the Rev. John Miller, a British chaplain stationed in New York, who sometimes went to Schenectady to administer the sacraments to the soldiers stationed there and to civilian churchmen.

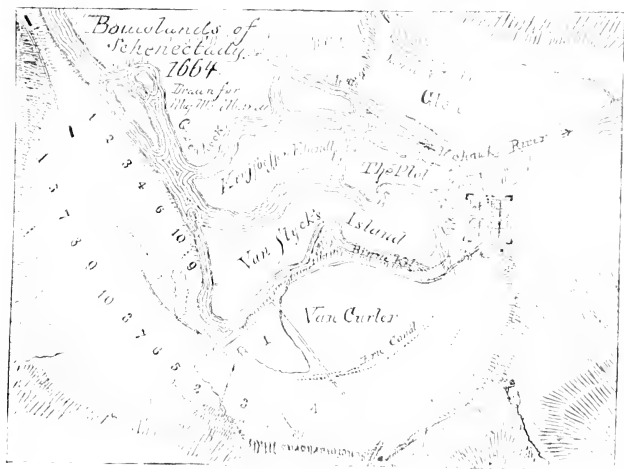


Several historians have regarded this fort as including the whole of the original village consisting of four blocks four hundred feet square. In fact this is the generally accepted idea, but there are reasons for doubting it.

A long foot note in Pearson's history describes the fort in detail and places the four blockhouses at the foot of State street, at State and Ferry streets; at Ferry and Front streets and at Front street and Washington avenue. These blockhouses were joined by the stockade and the whole affair covered the entire

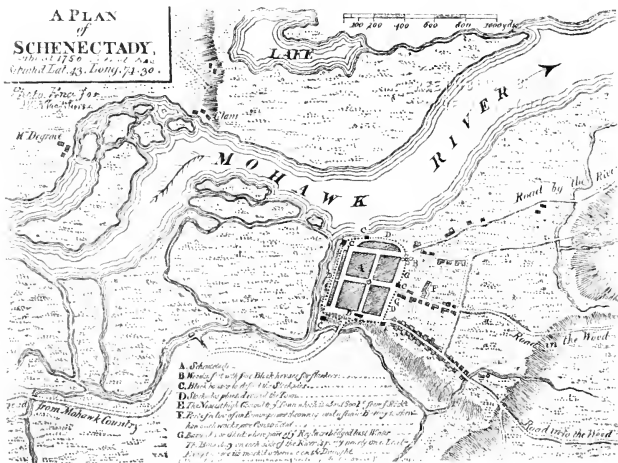
village, as originally laid out in 1664, in four squares of four hundred feet. This is according to the foot note.

In the first place, Mr. Miller's drawing shows a cluster of buildings without regularity and without the four blocks separated by the two wide streets, Church and Union. The survey of 1664 and all later maps plainly show the original four-block plan of the village, notably one of about 1755 and the Vrooman map of 1768. The probability is that Mr. Miller's fort was in reality a fort and not a stockaded village. This fort, as is plainly shown in the drawing, is bounded by the main river and Binni Kill on the north and west. Professor Pearson and Major MacMurray give



State street as the southern and Ferry street as the eastern boundaries. It is probable that they both jumped at a conclusion and have made the fort include the area of the original village with the stockades on State, Ferry, and Front streets and along the Binni Kill. The probability is that this fort occupied the parallelogram bounded by Front street continued, Washington

avenue, State street continued and the Binni Kill. In this area would be sufficient room for the buildings contained in the fort as drawn by Mr. Miller. After the fire which destroyed all but two of the houses on that night of the massacre, it is quite probable that this fort was built first and that the houses were then rebuilt on the sites of those which had been destroyed. While the rebuilding of the homes was in progress, the settlers no doubt lived in the little cabins within the fort and finally, after all the



homes had been finished, only the soldiers and Indians occupied the fort buildings. In case of another attack all the inhabitants of the village would retire to the fort, taking their live stock with them.

There were two large buildings for Indians, besides a large barn and numerous out-buildings for live stock during a siege. The buildings for the Indians were provided because, after the massacre, a considerable number of Mohawks lived with the remnants of the little settlement for encouragement and to help the reduced population regain its losses. These Indians helped



build the stockade and fort and gathered the crops at the first harvest after the massacre. The entire population at this time was less than one hundred adults, including those in the village and those outside, from the line of the town of Niskayuna to Hoffman's ferry, so the assistance rendered by the Indians was great and much needed. Three years after the date of Mr. Miller's plan of the fort, 1698, the entire population in the same territory was fifty men, forty-one women and one hundred and thirty-three children.

In 1705, the "Queen's new fort" was built in the vicinity of the junction of Ferry and Front streets, where the present Indian



monument stands. It was one hundred feet square and was surrounded by a double stockade with blockhouses at the corners. In 1735 it was rebuilt upon a stone foundation with the superstructure of heavy timber. Its area was increased to one hundred and twenty-four feet, each of the four blockhouses being twenty-four feet square.



*Abel Freder's Old Fort, Glenville.*

The frequent petitions for repairs to the existing fortifications and complaints of their condition by the people of Schenectady, to the Colonial authorities in Albany, gives the impression that while Schenectady, being a frontier post was considered to be the key to Albany and New York, the Colonial authorities did very little for it until actually forced to do so, because the forts and stockades were rotting. Even then much of the work and expense had to be done and borne by the settlers.

### CUSTOMS.

It was a hard-and-fast custom, even more of a rule than a custom, that married women should wear caps. This cap wearing by married women obtained from the earliest days well into the nineteenth century. A failure to conform to this custom was considered a very grave offence against propriety, as much so perhaps, as it would be to-day for a woman to drink at a public bar. One of the first things the young wife did was to make a supply of caps, dainty or ugly according to the taste of the maker. Usually the bride's best and finest needle work was put into the making of this badge of respectability, and ruffles as an adornment were so general that fluting irons were made for that especial purpose. As is shown in the picture, there was a base and graceful standard supporting a cylinder of three-quarters of an inch in diameter and six inches long. This was open at one end and cone-shaped at the other. This cylinder was highly polished. The heating device was a solid piece of iron of the same shape as the cylinder, but smaller so that it would easily rest inside. This heater had a rather long handle. When the wife wished to flute her dainty cap she first placed the heater in the



*Fluting Iron from the Sanders Mansion.*

coals of the open fire and when it was sufficiently hot it was placed in the cylinder and then the fluting was done. If the operator was blessed with pretty, graceful hands, the operation of cap fluting must have been very attractive. In those far-off and fine old days the women were seldom idle, even when the neighbors "dropped in" for a chat. On such occasions the thrifty wife usually took up the lighter and more dainty of the household duties of which cap fluting was one.

The old Dutch had many curious customs, curious according to twentieth-century ideas, but entirely natural and quite proper in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There was marriage, for instance: Many a searcher after family history, or pedigree, has had his or her—especially her—gray matter dislocated by the startling closeness of the marriage ceremony and the first birth, but further investigation reduced the dislocation and the search was continued calmly.

The Dutch in the Western Hemisphere considered marriage as a civil contract. When two young persons decided to marry,

that decision was in the eyes of the community, marriage. They lived together as man and wife and when the minister made his periodical visit for the purpose of administering the sacraments, they would have their civil marriage confirmed by the religious ceremony. In the early days the visits of the minister were sometimes three months, or even longer apart. In the cases of such persons who lived at a distance from one or another of the small settlements, the difficulty in having the marriage confirmed by a minister was greatly increased.



*Spinning Wheel from the Sanders Mansion.*

In those early days the conditions required that the community

should be made up of families. While the men were conquering Nature and planting and reaping, or hunting and fishing for food, the women were weaving and making garments and preserving such of the products of the fields and woods, as could be preserved, for the winter, so marriage was the natural condition. There were no bachelor-girls in the seventeenth century and the re-marriage of widows and widowers would be considered somewhat rapid even in Chicago.

Some of the very odd customs which obtained at funerals continued well into the nineteenth century. It is a matter of history that Dr. Eliphalet Nott, president of Union College, was the first man with sufficient moral courage to preach against, and finally to eliminate locally, the unseemly feasting and drinking which accompanied a funeral.

In those days women never went to the grave, but after the coffin had been taken from the house they drank spiced wine and nibbled cakes. Before the men returned from the grave the women withdrew and the men entered into the feasting with heartiness. Besides the cakes and wine they were provided with "Church warden pipes" and tobacco. In these days it is the artist-undertaker, or "mortuarians" as some of them style themselves, who reduce the family finances; in those days it was the man who sold wine and tobacco. The cakes were of an especial kind and were called "deadeakes."

In the case of a funeral in the family of the rich, or of those high-up in the official life of the Colony, large sums were spent on the wine and it was not unusual for a supply of it to be put in the cellar long before the first death so that it would be on hand and improving by age. The best room was reserved for funerals and was seldom used for any other purpose, unless



*Eighteenth Century Cut Glass in the Bradt Family.*



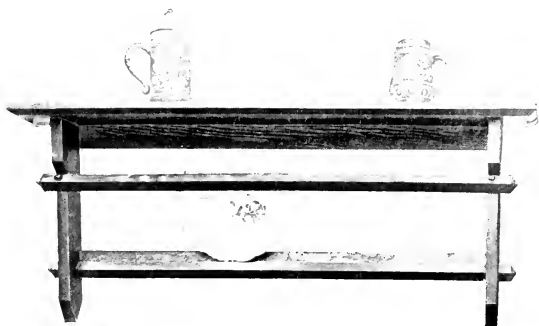
*Corner of Washington Avenue and State Street.*

indeed, it was on the rare occasions when the dominie made a brief visit. Funerals were only attended by those who were invited. The list would be made out and given to the sexton and he would do the inviting verbally. There were fixed charges for the services of the sexton for delivering the invitations; for burial; ringing the bell, tolling it, for use of the great pall or the little pall. If the delivery of invitations required going out from the settlement, he was allowed to make an extra charge.

In regard to the palls: They were the property of the church and were two in number—one small the other large. When the coffin was carried from the best room to the front door, it was placed upon a bier and then carried to the grave upon the shoulders of the bearers; the pall having been thrown over the bier. Down to 1800, Schenectady did not possess a hearse so, while it was a hardship in stormy weather and much more so in very cold winter weather, to carry the coffin on the shoulders from the house to the grave in the village, the conditions on outlying farms made it necessary for the family to have a small plot of ground set apart for burial purposes. In April, 1800, the consistory of the First Dutch Reformed Church decided to procure a hearse for the use of the congregation and the public under certain regulations. In December of that year the hearse arrived. It, with the harness, was given into the charge of the sexton and application for its use was made to him and he was empowered to collect the fees.

Another curious, and no doubt extremely popular, custom was the generous use of rum on all occasions. If a house was being built, or a church, or any work or occasion of a public nature there was an item in the bill of expense for rum. On April 28, 1748, Jacob Mynderse was paid £3-12-2 for rum for the dominie's bee and on the same day of the month in 1751, Isaac A. Truax was paid £1-13-6 for sugar and rum for another bee which only goes to show that in those days when preachers were hard up for a subject, or his wife was too busy to write a sermon for him, he could not go to that subject, which has been reduced

to a mere shadow by the preachers of to-day, RUM, for he had not then discovered that the crime of the world was caused by rum. On the contrary, he found that with proper ingredients it was a very acceptable substitute for water from the Mohawk, at one of his bees. Another item which shows how close were the relations of rum and religion in those old days, is from the treasurer's book of the First Reformed Church; July 5, 1814—"Paid for liquor when the old spire was taken down, 37 1-2 cents."





## Chapter III. Calamities.

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### MASSACRE.



THE first and greatest calamity was that which took place in the night of February 8, 1690. In that part of the geographies, of twenty-five years ago, which was devoted to the State of New York, there was a picture of the event called, "The burning of Schenectady in 1690," but in the Mohawk valley it is always referred to as the Massacre.

The conditions which made it possible for the French and their Indian allies to destroy Schenectady was Protestant zeal, bordering upon religious hysteria. The Leislerian craze is a matter of State history and will only be referred to for the purpose of combating those persons who attribute the inactivity and unprepared condition of the settlers of Schenectady, to Dutch stupidity and phlegm, whereas, as a matter of fact, it was religious hysteria.

At the time William and Mary ascended the throne of Great Britain, there lived in New York a merchant possessed of large fortune, who was the political ancestor of the long line of political bosses with which New York has been cursed or blessed, according to whether one is a citizen or a "grafter." This man, Jacob Leisler, assumed the control of the Colonial government and was encouraged in so doing by the Protestant extremists, who held that all officials, in office under James, were Papists. Leisler removed the officials and appointed those who were friends of himself and his son-in-law, Milborne. Bigotry was rampart to such an extent, that the people of Schenectady would obey only the men appointed by Leisler, nor would they provide for the soldiers

sent for their protection. It is tradition, that they felt so safe in their Protestant security that they made snow men at the gates of the fort to act as sentinels instead of placing men of flesh and blood there on that bitter winter's night, when the French Commander, *Sieur Le Moyne de Sainte Helene*, with one hundred and fourteen French and ninety-six Indians, two hundred and ten in all, made their attack upon the unprepared settlement of four hundred inhabitants.

When this French expedition set out, it had no definite ending to its journey by woods and water, other than to attack the British settlements in New York. They left Montreal in January, 1690, and after a six-days' march through the deep snow in the intense cold, they halted for consultation, when the Indians demanded to know their destination. The French favored an attack upon Albany, that being the largest and most important of the settlements, up the river from New York. The Indians, however, seemed to favor attacking Corlear—as Schenectady was called by the French out of respect to Van Corlear, the really honest Dutch gentleman—as they were more familiar with the locality. A portion of the Indians who were with the French, were composed of those renegades from the Mohawks who had been seduced to Canada and to the adoption of the Roman faith by the Jesuit Fathers, mentioned in a previous chapter. These red fiends who had adopted the faith of the Holy Catholic Church hated those other fiends who had adopted the faith of their Protestant Dutch friends; in both cases from ulterior motives, not from conviction, notwithstanding their professed belief that the murdering, scalp-lifting savage of Canada went directly to paradise by way of the rapid transit system of confession and absolution; or that other belief, that the equally bloody savages of the Mohawk valley entered heaven over the "straight and narrow path" of Protestant bigotry.

The desires of the Indians carried weight with the French, so the expedition kept to the right at Ticonderoga, where the trails for Albany and Schenectady diverged, and arrived opposite

Schenectady just before midnight. They intended to make the attack early in the morning of the next day, between two and three o'clock, but the cold was so intense it was impossible to delay, as they had no protection from it and, of course, could not build fires, as they would warn the people of their presence.

The advance was made immediately; the traditional snow sentinels were found keeping guard at the gate which was open, as if to invite the murder and desolation which followed. The attack was made, upon signal, first upon the homes in the village and then upon the fort at stockade around one corner of the village. In this fort were Lieut. Enos Talmadge and twenty-four men of the Connecticut soldiery. Lieut. de Mantet, the second in mand of the French, led the attack upon the



*The Massacre, January, 1690.*

the fort, the gate of which was finally burst open after great difficulty, the fort set on fire and the defenders killed or captured. Few of the men in the homes of the village made any defence. The Marquis de Montigny, a volunteer made an attack upon the home of Adam Vrooman, but he defended it with courage and desperation. The marquis was wounded twice by a spear in the hands of Vrooman and would have been driven off but for French reinforcements arriving just in time. Vrooman's life was spared for various reasons as is told in the chapter on Ancient Dwellings.



*North Side of State Street, near Washington Avenue.*

The murder of the settlers continued for two hours and the flames which consumed their homes continued all night and into the following day. After the killing was finished, the Indians were kept busy setting fire to the homes, for the French commander, from past experience feared, that should the Indians have nothing to occupy their attention they would hunt up the liquor with which all Dutchmen were well supplied and, becoming drunk, would be unable to fight should assistance be sent to the defence of the village. French sentinels were posted and the other French soldiers obtained some much-needed rest. Of the 400 inhabitants, sixty-two were killed, and thirty taken prisoners to Canada. Of the eighty buildings in the village, only two were not burned, one being that of Captain John A. Glen and the other being that of the widow Bradt in which the wounded marquis had been cared for. Of the considerable number of homes outside the stockaded village, only three were not burned. The total loss to the Dutch was estimated by the French at \$80,000.

At sunrise the French sent some of their men across the river to the Sanders mansion to obtain his surrender, but he had no intention of surrendering to them and was prepared for a defence with his farm hands and some Indians. There was no intention on the part of the French commander to attack Captain Sanders, who, with his wife, were notable in Canada for their goodness to French prisoners who had been captured by the Mohawks. The fact that Major and Mrs. Sanders were staunch Protestants, giving help and comfort to the French Romanists, added greatly to the regard of the French for them.

The French began the return journey to Canada with the loss of but seventeen Frenchmen and four Indians and with thirty prisoners—no women nor old men being taken, as they could not stand the march through the snow in the intense cold—and fifty horses; thirty-four of them, however, were killed for food on the way to Montreal.

It was on this occasion that Simon Schermerhorn rode to Albany, with a wound in one thigh, to spread the alarm. On

February 10, two days after the massacre, the Albany authorities sent Captain Jonathan Bull, who was in command of the Connecticut troops in Albany, to Schenectady, with five men from each company, to bury the dead. The authorities sent a long letter of appeal to Governor Bradstreet, of Massachusetts, in which the massacre was described and help asked for the destitute.

The conditions in the little settlement were awful, for not only were the dead and wounded to be considered, but the living were without shelter in midwinter. There was danger that the settlement would be abandoned. This was something the Albanians and Indians of the valley did not want.

The Mohawks of the valley were the friends of the Dutch and sympathized with them in their great loss by death and fire. Just after the people were recovering from their dazed condition and began to return to the scene of the conflagration, they assembled in the little square, where they were met by the Chief Sachem of the Onondaga Tribe, of the Five Nations, who delivered the following poetic and figurative address of sympathy and encouragement. As was their custom, he presented a belt of wampum at the proper stages in his address.

"Brethren, the murder of our friends, the white men of Schenectady, grieves us greatly; as much as if it had been done to ourselves, for we are of the same chain. The French have not acted like brave men, but like robbers with hearts of darkness. But be not discouraged on this account. We give you this belt to wipe away your tears.

"Brethren, we do not think that what the French have done can be called a victory; it is only a further proof of their cruel deceit. Five moons ago they sent messengers with the white flag in their hands, and the talk of peace on their lips, but their thoughts were of war, as you now see by woeful experience. This is the third time they have acted thus deceitfully. They did so before at Cadaraqui, and in the country of the Senecas. They have broken open our house at both ends. Once far toward the home of the sun and here, where we now stand. But we hope

to have revenge. One hundred brave Mohawks are now upon their track. They are young warriors. Their feet are like the elk's feet and very sure. Their shoulders are strong, like the shoulders of the buffalo. Their hatchets are as keen as the sharp north wind, and their eyes are eagles' eyes. They will follow the Frenchmen to their very doors. Not a man in Canada shall dare to cross his threshold for a stick of wood. We now gather up our dead to bury them, by this second belt.

"Brethren, the mischief which has befallen us is as great and sudden as if it had come from heaven. Our forefathers taught us to go with all speed to bemoan and lament with our brethren in the same chain, when disaster happens to them. We must watch carefully lest other mischief come upon us. Let us sleep but little; and when we lie down, let our quivers be full of arrows, our bows all strung, and our hands upon our knives. Take this bill of vengeance, that you may be more watchful for the future. We give you eye-water to make you sharp sighted, with this third belt."

"We are in the house where we have often met, to renew our chain; but the house has blood upon its walls and the doorway is polluted. We have come to wash up the blood and clean the walls, by this fourth belt."

"Brethren, we are strong. Our chain is a strong chain, a silver chain and can neither rust nor be broken. We do not mean to forsake you now that you are in trouble. Very soon, when the trees begin to bud, and the bark can be parted from the trees, our hunters will return from the far country and then we shall be a great band of fighting men, ready to fight your battles. We are of the race of the Bear, and the Bear, you know, never yields while one drop of blood is left. We must all be Bears, as typified by this fifth belt.

"Brethren, be patient. This evil which has come upon you is a heavy one, but we shall soon have better times. The sun, which hath been cloudy, will shine again pleasantly. Take courage, courage, courage, brethren, with this sixth belt."

When the great orator of the Onondagas had finished, all of the other Indians present signified their approval of his remarks by a sharp exclamation and one of the elders of the church expressed the gratitude of the homeless, grief-stricken little community and then the sad duty of burying the dead was begun.

### BEUKENDAAL FIGHT.

There is no prettier miniature valley scenery in Schenectady County than is to be found where the fight with the Indians took place in July, 1748, known historically as "The Beukendaal Massacre." "Beukendaal" means "beechdale," the fight having started in a charming little dale well filled with beech trees.

"Massacre" is a misnomer, for it was anything but that. For a fact, it was an out-and-out, stand-up fight with the settlers the attacking party.



*Another Brook or Kill.*

This "beechdale" is about two miles west of Scotia, on the northerly side of the New York Central railroad, at Hardin's



*Ravine near the DeGraaf House, called Beukendaal.*

Crossing and a glimpse of it may be had from the trolley or steam cars as they pass, the red brick school house not far from the tracks on the north side being the landmark of the place from the view point of the cars. "Beukendaal" begins just behind the school. There is another brook, or "kill" as the old Dutch called



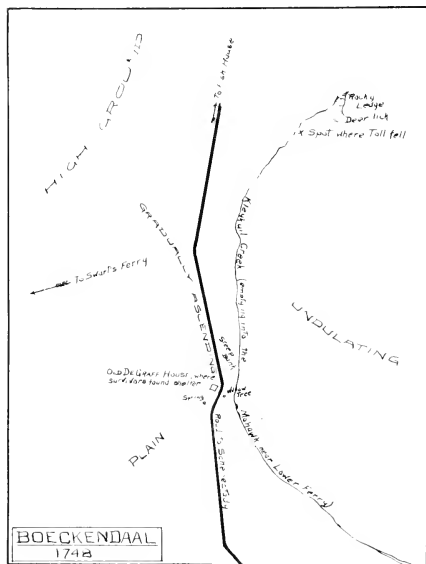
it, running through an even more charming and romantic little dell, a quarter of a mile west of "beechdale" and parallel with it. The stream which runs through it flows over a flat bed of rock. In places it flows between miniature cliffs well wooded and is broken up into numerous little falls. It was between these two charming dales that Abraham De Graaf built the home which was temporarily turned into a fort by the white men, when the attack of the Indians became too strong for them.

The fight with the Indians began with the shooting of Captain Daniel Toll, by a party of Indians from Canada, at the upper end of "Beukendaal," where he, Dick Van Vorst, and a negro had gone to look for some strayed horses. They heard, as they supposed, the horses stamping in an open space beyond the trees and bushes. When they emerged into the open, they were horrified to find a party of Indians. Mr. Toll was killed, Van Vorst was captured, and the negro fled to Schenectady, a distance of three miles, to give the alarm. The firing was heard by Adrian Van Slyck at his farm, "Maalwyck,"—now known as the Toll farm, about a mile out of Scotia on the River road toward Amsterdam—and he too sent word to the town for help. He did not know surely that the shooting meant Indians, or that any one had been killed, but he did know that Mr. Toll, Mr. Van Vorst and the negro were out in that neighborhood looking for strayed horses.

Four parties of armed men responded to the summons. The first was composed of Lieutenant Darling, of Connecticut, and his men who were stationed at the fort in the town. The second was in command of Auckes Van Slyck; the third was led by Adrian Van Slyck, of Maalwyck, with some of the New York levies; while the fourth party was in command of Col. Jacob Glen, Jr., and Albert Van Slyck. These four parties, numbering 60 men, did not go to "Beukendaal" at the same time, there being an hour or more between the arrival of the first and last parties.

The first of the volunteers to arrive, saw Mr. Toll sitting—alive as they supposed—with his back to a fence and in front of him was a crow, flying at short distances from him, but not away

from him. This strange sight of a crow remaining near a man excited their curiosity; the Indians intended it should, and when those in advance rushed forward to find an explanation of the strange sight, it was given them in the form of balls from Indian muskets. The crow was tied with a thong so that it was a companion of the dead man against its will. These men were immediately aware that they were in ambush. Before they could recover from their surprise and horror, many of them were killed



*Scene of Beukendaal Fight.*

and several captured. The survivors retreated as best they could and were supported by the arrival of the second party under Anckes Van Slyck. When Adrian Van Slyck arrived with his New York levies, the sight of the Indians and the dead lying about was too much for them. They turned and fled, fairly pushing the earth from them and burning the wind in their haste to reach the safety

of the town. Albert Van Slyck, brother of Adrian, who lead the levies, in writing to Colonel William Johnson—afterwards Sir William—stigmatized them as cowards.

Finally, all the four detachments from the town had arrived, and the fight became as awful and furious as only a hand-to-hand

fight with Indians could become. It was knife, tomahawk, clubbed musket and tight finger-grips of throats, with the settlers ever striving to reach the DeGraaf house.



*DeGraaf House, Beukendaal, where the Settlers took Refuge.*

This was finally accomplished and the doors and windows were barricaded. The settlers went up stairs and, making loopholes just under the eaves by pulling away the boards, made things so hot for the Indians that they kept out of range of the muskets, for they well knew that the men in the house were all sharp-shooters and that each boom of a smooth bore and crack of rifle meant a "good Indian."

Van Vorst, who was captured at the time Mr. DeGraaf was killed, was in charge of two young bucks who were so greatly interested in the fight that they neglected their prisoner; he therefore managed to cut his bonds and escape. When Colonel Jacob Glen arrived with the Schenectady militia, the Indians retreated and started for Canada.

The killed were, Jacob Glen, Jr., Captain Daniel Toll, Frans Van der Bogert, J. P. Van Antwerp, Adam Conde, Adrian Van

Slyck, John A. Bradt, Johannes Vrooman, Daniel Van Antwerpen, Cornelius Viele, Jr., Nicolas DeGraaf, Lieutenant Darling and seven of his men. The prisoners, who were taken to Canada, were: Harman Veeder, Isaac Truax, Albert J. Veeder, Frank Connor, J. S. Vrooman, Lewis Groot, John Phelps and six of the Connecticut soldiers under Lieutenant Darling.

### HISTORIC FIRES.

1690.

The only enemy more dreaded by pioneers in the early days, than the Indian, was fire, and in the winter of 1690, the brave little pioneer settlement of Schenectady suffered from a combination of both enemies, at the same time; for the historical event pictured in the geographies of thirty years ago, as "The Burning of Schenectady" and which is known in Schenectady historically, as "The Massacre," took place in that intensely cold winter, when the French and Indians, with musket, knife and tomahawk, killed sixty of the inhabitants; and with fire, destroyed all but two of the eighty odd buildings within the stockade. Fire was also used on the living bodies of some of the wounded, and thirty men and youths were taken, as prisoners, to Canada. The two houses spared were the ones into which the wounded French officer, de Montigny, had been carried; and the other was that of Major Glen. Such wholesale destruction of homes and public buildings by fire was, in those days, a far greater calamity than would be the wiping-out of Schenectady to-day. To-day there would be immediate help by public subscription; those of means sufficient to rebuild could soon obtain the material for so doing; but, in 1690, the material had to be slowly and laboriously cut down in the forest and hewn into timbers; and in the meantime, as all the men were thus employed, there was no one to provide food from the forest and the river. That the people remained to repair their loss, instead of, broken in spirit, going to other settlements, showed the "stuff" of which the old pioneer settlers were made. Schenectady was slow in those days; it is slow to-day, when compared with other places; but now, as then, Schenectady is very tenacious and sure.

1819.

The second of Schenectady's great fires was in 1819, and the greatest from the standpoint of territory burned, but not from any other; for the destruction of 1690 nearly annihilated the inhabitants as well as the buildings of the little community.

This fire started in a tan-yard, down toward the end of Mill lane, in the vicinity of what is now the continuation of Ferry street, where the long-since disused Conde Mill stands. There was a strong wind blowing from the south and the fire spread with terrific rapidity—the more so, as nearly all of the buildings were of wood, and the method and means of fighting fires in those days were most primitive.

In 1819, the law required each inhabitant to provide and keep in their houses leathern fire-buckets, properly marked and numbered, so that they could be returned to their custodians. As soon as there was an alarm of fire, the people were required to set these fire-buckets out in front of their houses, so that those who composed the volunteer fire department and such other citizens as should give assistance, might find them. The best work was then done by a bucket-line, consisting of firemen and citizens, formed in line to the nearest water—whether it was river, cistern or well—when the filled buckets were passed from hand to hand and returned in the same way, empty. So it is easily seen that to stop the progress of so great a fire, forced onward by so strong a wind, with such primitive fire-fighting apparatus, was impossible. Soon, the flames had reached State street and then they turned down toward Washington avenue and through Church, to Union and Front streets, not burning every building in its course; for the buildings were set on fire by flaming brands blown by the wind, so there were, here and there, buildings which escaped.

In 1819, Schenectady was a river-port, the first west of Albany, so that all freights, going west from the Hudson river points, were conveyed to Schenectady in wagons and loaded up on boats for the trip up the Mohawk; and the reverse was the order, when the products of the western part of the State were



J. D. Felthousen's Grocery. Protection House No. 1, 1870.  
Present location of Teller & Stanford.

being shipped east. The shore along the main Binni Kill that is, that branch of the river lying back of Washington avenue, was lined with great storerooms and mercantile establishments. In fact, the wholesale and retail trade of the city was in the vicinity of Washington avenue and Front street. There were also, considerable boat-building yards along the Binni Kill and on the main river back of Front street. The great fire of 1819 changed all this, for when rebuilding operations began, the business-center of Schenectady moved up town; and up town, in those days, was between Ferry street and the spot where the canal is. The old business-center then became, as it is now and probably will be for many generations to come, the finest residential portion of the city. This is as it should be; for there is not a square foot of the ground, bounded by Union and Front streets and Washington avenue and Ferry streets, about which, at least, one item of historical interest, or old family-anecdote and tradition, could not be written.

There is now living in this city, in 1904, one resident, who distinctly remembers the fact of this fire of 1819. That is Col. J. Andrew Barhydt, of No. 7 Church street, who, in his ninety-first year, recalls the excitement of the year, when he was but five years old.

#### 1861.

In its Fire Department, Schenectady has ever been fortunate, from the organization of its first company and the fact that its per capita loss, by fire, has always been less than in any other city of the State. It is evident that Schenectady has had reason to boast of and to be proud of its fire-fighters.

While the picture of Protection Hose House, No. 1, and the men who belonged to it is not old, when compared with the city and some of its families, it is ancient, as far as the Fire Department is concerned, for it was taken in 1860.

In 1860, the persons who had the temerity to drive, for pleasure, about the streets of the city, were bounced over the old-fashioned cobble-stones, which chiefly came from the farms of



*Organized in 1800.*



Glenville. The farmer who brought in a load of these stones, gathered from farm land on the sand plains above the fertile river flats, was not required to pay toll at the bridge connecting Glenville with the city.

In 1860, the men wore bell-crowned stovepipe hats and the women wore "waterfalls" and wide-spread hoopskirts. They drank Mohawk river water and never guessed that it was not fit for washing in, to say nothing about drinking it; and the resultant diseases, which fattened the purses of the physicians, were not traced to microbes or germs of the Mohawk.

In 1860, railroads and the telegraph were an established success; but the man with sufficient imagination to suggest the telephone; the ability to send electrical messages from England to America through the air and to make the wireless system of telegraphing a commercial necessity, would have excited the sympathy of his friends and relatives, on account of his sad mental condition. The trolley car, automobile, phonograph; the transmission of power from Niagara and the upper waters of the Hudson over many miles of territory for manufacturing purposes, were not, in 1860, even items of a wine-supper nightmare.

In 1860, Schenectady was the broom-corn center of the world, and the making of brooms was its greatest industry. Had any of the men in the group of old-time firemen, been told that broom-corn-raising and broom-making would dwindle to tiny proportions, and that the locomotive works would make engines for Japan; that it would receive and fill orders for fifty, a hundred, and even two hundred engines from individual railroads, they would have expressed their pity for the dreamer in strong terms. Had some one predicted a plant in Schenectady for the manufacture of engines to be driven by captured lightning, they would, probably, have fled to the woods, as the only refuge from such maniacs; and should the same person have predicted that this plant would employ twelve thousand persons and pay them \$600,000 every month—well, even the imagination of the twentieth century cannot conjecture what would have happened.

The men, who were members of Protection Hose, when this group was taken, did their full share in fighting one of the three historical fires of Schenectady. On August 4, 1861, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, fire was discovered in the broom-shop of Otis Smith, which stood on the rear of the lot where Mr. Whitmyre's residence is, at the corner of Washington avenue and Front street. A strong gale was blowing from the west that day, and it was not long before the buildings between the burning shop and the



1861. *Burning of First Dutch Reformed Church, Corner Union and Church Streets.*

Scotia bridge, with but one exception, were destroyed. Then, some one discovered that a blazing brand had been carried from the broom-shop to the tower of the First Reformed Church, two blocks away, on the corner of Union and Church streets, and that the church was a mass of flames.

The men were already nearly exhausted, for the labor of working the breaks on one of those old-fashioned hand fire-engines was heart-breaking. Word was sent to Troy and Albany that help was needed, and Troy responded by getting an engine to Schenectady, while the church was still burning. The wind increased in its power, and another brand was carried from the church way up to 117 South Center street, near the corner of Franklin street. This building was burned and, finally, when another brand set fire to the building on Nott terrace, just south of the German Church, the men, who had been working steadily for hours, were nearly ready to drop, but they continued and eventually stopped further destruction.

Protection Hose-house stood on the south side of State street, the first building from the corner of Center street. The names of the men in the group are as follows: T. W. McCamus, Ephraim Clowe, deceased; T. B. Brow, deceased; J. J. Spier, J. B. Henry, deceased; George Hardin, deceased; J. E. Taylor, deceased; A. Wilhelm, J. J. Giles, Dan Daley, deceased; J. J. Parker, J. W. Mais, George Shaible, all deceased; J. B. Marsh, Clinton C. Brown, W. Lawrence, Alex. McMillen, A. Ward, J. W. Cleveland, A. B. Swift, L. Rolff, M. B. Van Patten, J. Stevens, J. Bradt, J. W. Sanders, Joseph Case, Charles Wilson, John Bronk, Charles Banna, Marcus Ahrect, D. M. Putnam, David Reynolds, deceased; E. Fink, Fred Dunbar, J. H. Wheelock, John Gow, J. Long, William Ades, J. L. Hill, Wilson Davis, John Wendell, J. I. G. Fort, O. S. Luffman, C. W. Sanders, J. Hewis, and the following, all of these deceased: E. W. Lien, John Vedder, Frederick Vedder, I. V. Reagles, Giles Marlette, Vedder Van Patten, Jacob DeForest, Isaac Cain, C. B. Swart, Charles Walley, Howard Barringer, E. L. Lindley, J. H. Draper, H. N. Vedder, J. A. Van Zandt, Palmer Eggleston, and W. L. Goodrich.

## Chapter IV. Ancient Dwellings.

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### MABIE HOUSE.



IF THE very old house still standing on the Brandywine mill property was not built by Adam Vrooman, the hero of the massacre, then the Mabie house, near Rotterdam Junction, is the oldest dwelling standing in Schenectady County. As this point in connection with the Vrooman house, will never be settled any more definitely than it is now, it is safe to give to the Mabie house the title of "Oldest."

The date of its erection is not known, nor have historians been able to do more than ascertain beyond doubt that it was standing as early as 1706. The house stands on a bluff on the south bank of the Mohawk river seven miles above the city, on the deepest part of a great curve, so that a grand view up and down the river and across to the charming Glenville hills, may be had.

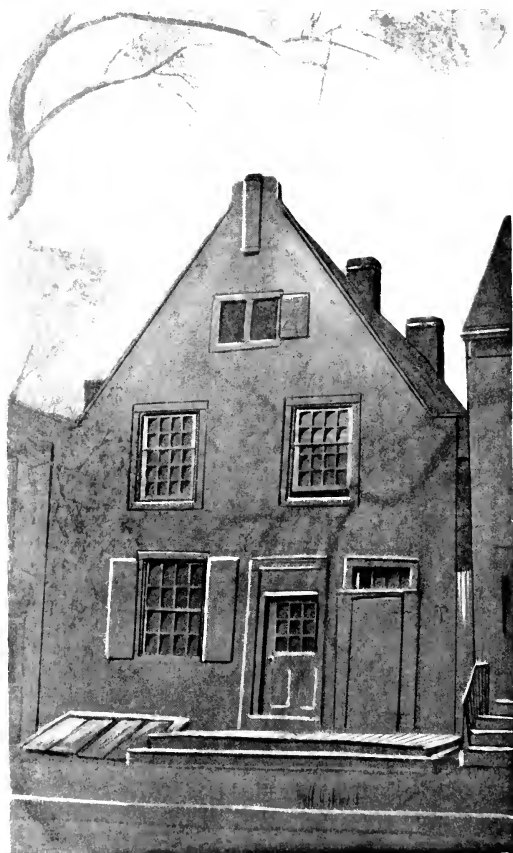
This old house is built of heavy stones quarried from the hillside. The walls are laid without mortar, just as a stone wall is built, only the fitting of the stones was much more carefully attended to. The outside is pointed with mortar and the inside plastered. These heavy stone walls are built to the height of one story and then comes the typical Dutch peaked roof with the second story and attic in it. As in all of the old houses and mansions, the timbers are massive. The floor of the second story is made of thick plank or hewn timbers with the lower side, which forms the ceiling of the first floor, planed smooth. Even the window frames are made of timber. Major MacMurray, the editor of Pearson's History of the Schenectady Patent, who was

also an historical investigator of repute on his own account, had reason to believe from the slight hints he was able to obtain from old documents, that this house was built when D. J. Van Antwerp

*Mabie House.*

received the patent for the farm upon which the old Mabie house stands. This would fix its erection between the years 1670 and 1680.

Jan Pieterse Mabie was an early settler in the village of Schenectady, his village lot being on Church street next to the lot upon which the First Dutch Church stands, on the north side of it. It included the two pieces of property known as the Washington and Benjamin property, that is, the residences of Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Benjamin are on the old Mabie property, which in his days had a frontage on Church street of 108 feet and a depth of 206. That he lived on this property, before 1690, is shown by a paper confirming his ownership, given by the trustees, because the original deed was burnt on the night of the massacre, 1690.



*The Arent Bradt House, North Side State Street near Washington Avenue.*

Jan Mabie owned a farm of sixty-three acres on the south side of the river where the old house stands. This he purchased from D. J. Van Antwerp in 1706 and it is still in the Mabie family although not now occupied by members of it. Jan Mabie was a considerable owner of property elsewhere. The Mohawks gave him land on both sides of Schoharie creek. His wife, Anna Borsboom, owned property consisting of farm land and a village lot on the south-east corner of Front street and Washington avenue, all of which she inherited from her father, and Mabie owned farm land on the opposite side of the river from the old house called Wolf flat near what is now known as Wolf hollow. Later he became possessed of considerable pasture land between Front street and the river.

#### BRADT HOUSE.

The Bradts of Schenectady are descended from Arent Andriese Bradt who, with his brother Albert settled in Albany, Arent later going to Schenectady as one of the original proprietors, in 1662. He died that year, leaving his wife and six children, three of whom were boys, Andries, Samuel and Dirk.

The first son was a brewer at the time of the massacre when he was killed by the Indians. His son Arent and a daughter survived him. This son was known later in life as Captain Arent Bradt who was one of the distinguished and wealthiest men of his day. He was a brewer like his father and built the old Bradt house on lower State street, near Washington avenue which was standing as late as 1895. Captain Bradt was a member of the Provincial Assembly in 1745 and a trustee of Schenectady for fifty-two years, from 1715 to 1767, the latter being the year of his death.

The claim to ownership, instead of trusteeship, has been referred to elsewhere, but it was not stated that Captain Bradt did more than anyone else to sustain the policy of "We" as opposed to that of "I," of the Fifteen Original Proprietors. Ryer Schermerhorn was the trustee who tried to set up the claim of

personal ownership and although he was a relative of Captain Bradt, he, the captain, made a will of such nature that it would prevent him or any one from successfully setting up such a claim in the future. Ryer Schermerhorn and several illegitimate trustees whom he appointed to succeed his father, did later start a suit in this same matter and the will of Captain Bradt was the stronghold of the people. Captain Bradt left a considerable fortune to his three sons, Andries, Johannes and Harmanus, the



*Bradt House, Built in 1736.*

latter, in trade with the Indians, becoming one of the wealthy men of the place and times. These three sons continued to live on the property which formed the original village lot on lower State street.

Samuel Bradt, a brother of Arent Bradt, the first of the name in Schenectady, left his farm of thirty acres to his son, Arent Bradt, who built a brick house upon it previous to or in the year of 1736, for a brick in the front of this house bears his name and that date. This house is still standing and in good repair, near



the city pumping station in Rotterdam and just north of the home of the late Congressman Simon Schermerhorn, and owned by his heirs. It is a good sample of the early Dutch farm house and



*Late Eighteenth Century Miniatures in the Bradt Family.*

shows the characteristic manner of laying brick, which was popular with the Dutch. The Bradts were all owners of considerable property in farm lands and village lots.

### VROOMAN HOUSE.

The Vroomans of New York State are all descended from Hendrick Mees Vrooman, who, with two brothers, Peter and Jacob, came to the Dutch Colony previous to 1677, in which year Hendrick moved to Schenectady and purchased forty acres of the Van Curler farm, a narrow strip beginning near Water street and extending across the lowland to where the canal and New York Central Railroad now is, back to near the bluff, east of Center street. His village lot was on State street, between Center street and the westerly tracks of the New York Central Railroad. As the brothers died without leaving children, Hendrick was the founder of the family. Harmaus was killed in the massacre.

Adam, Hendrick's son, was born in Holland in 1649 and in his twentieth year was, by his own wish, bound to Cornelis Van den Berg, of Albany, who taught him the trade of millwright. Adam's wages were of a size to cause heart failure: \$32 and a pair of new shoes the first year and \$48 the second year.

He built a mill for himself on the Sand Kill at the termination of his apprenticeship—where the pond bordering Brandywine

park is located—and if the old Dutch house, still standing and in good repair, was built by him, it is the oldest dwelling, now used as such, in the state. According to the opinion of the late Judge John Sanders, the historian, there is every reason to believe that Adam Vrooman did build this house near his mill. It is a matter of fact, that he built the mill; obtained a patent for the Sand Kill lands from the Trustees of Schenectady in 1708; that his grandson, Isaac, died in the house in 1707; and that Adam's descendants occupied the house and property as late as 1807, so it is quite probable that Judge Sander's belief is fact.

In the attack by the French and Indians in 1690, Adam Vrooman was the only one of the settlers who deliberately planned a defence of his home; the other settlers seemed to be too overcome by the surprise and the horror of the night to do anything definite for their defence. Adam barricaded his home and fought so desperately that the commander of the French promised him safety if he would surrender, a promise the more readily agreed to by the Indians as he was well known by the Mohawks through his brother-in-law—that Van Slyck whose mother was the daughter of a chief—and there was the additional reason for being willing to spare him, that he was a friend of the Glens. Adam's wife and child, his father and brother were killed in the massacre and his two sons, Barent and Wouter, were taken to Canada as captives of the enemy.

Adam Vrooman owned a great deal of property. He owned the site of the present village of Middleburgh, and in 1715 began to build a stone house upon it, two stories high. This house was torn down, one night, by Conrad Weiser and his Palatine followers, so Adam returned to Schenectady to live. He had thirteen children to whom he left a large estate and an enviable reputation, his death occurring in February, 1730, at the age of eighty-one years.

The Vroomans of the old days were men of large frame and great strength. Especially were the four grandsons of Adam: Peter, Samuel, Isaac and Cornelius, known for many miles about

for their great strength. Samuel and Cornelius, tradition says, as a test of what they could do, each carried between eight and nine hundred pounds a distance of about one hundred feet. A sister of these husky boys was also possessed of great strength for a woman and a degree of courage that was remarkable. One day, a man, who was given to quarreling, was talking with her father and one of her brothers when strong words were passed from one to the other and back again with interest added. Miss Vrooman, fearing that should either her father or brother lay their hands upon the man he would be seriously injured or possibly killed, gathered him up in her arms and threw him out of the house through the doorway.

That the Vrooman family is numerous and that members of the family are to be found in nearly every state of the Union, although descended from one American ancestor, may be attributed to the very large families of the immediate descendants of Hendrick Mees Vrooman, the original ancestor.



## Chapter V. Churches.

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### FIRST DUTCH REFORMED CHURCH.



THE first Dutch Reformed Church building in Schenectady was built at the expense of Alexander Lindsey Glen in 1684 and given by him to the little community. When the men who settled Schenectady in 1662 were paving the way for the founding of one of the oldest and most respectable Dutch Churches in New York State, there were but five churches in the whole Colony. They were in New York, Brooklyn, Flatbush, Kingston, and Albany, or, New Amsterdam, Breuckleyn, Midwout-and-Amersfort, Esopus, Beverwyck, as they were then called.

Although there was no church building till 1684, there must have been a church organization several years before that date, for the Rev. Gideon Schaets, the second pastor of the Dutch Church in Albany, journeyed from that city to Schenectady once in three months to administer the sacraments. This was in 1679, and it is probable that the organization was earlier even than this date. As to the meeting places: the living room in every house was at the disposal of the community for purposes of religious worship, but the probability is, that on the rare occasions when there was a minister over from Albany, the services were in the large room of the fort, or the blockhouse in the fort.

The first minister of the Church, the Rev. Petrus Thessenmacker, was called to Schenectady in 1682, according to one authority. This would make it appear that he began his pastoral duties at least a year and possibly two years before the church building was erected by Mr. Glen. During the six years of his

pastorate, the tiny church organization grew numerically and in finances. As a matter of fact the First Dutch Reformed Church of Schenectady was in a healthy condition spiritually and temporally from the start and has continued to increase in strength down to the present day. This has been in the face of the vicissitudes of the times and speaks volumes for the make-up of the congregation. Its only strife was with the enemies of Almighty God and of the Colony.

The French and Indian raid of 1690, which resulted in the burning of Schenectady, was the first heavy blow to the congregation. Not only was their church building burned, but their faithful minister was horribly killed and his body burned. It seems, however, the French commander had given orders that the minister was to be kept alive, as it was hoped some important information, desired by the French, could be obtained from him; if not by persuasion, at least by Indian torture.

The times were uncertain and people were menaced with dangers, so there was no religious service led by a minister from the terrible night of February 8 and 9, 1690, till 1694, when the Rev. Godfriedus Dellius, of Albany, occasionally visited Schenectady during the five succeeding years, he making eighteen visits in that time. In 1699, the Rev. J. P. Nucella, who succeeded Mr. Dellius in Albany after the return to Holland of the latter, continued the visits to Schenectady. In the time these two ministers were visiting Schenectady, seventy-six children were baptized, seven of the number being Indian children, twenty-five persons joined the church, and twelve couples were married. The peace of Ryswick in 1697, began a new era for the people of the harrassed settlement and for the church. In 1700 the Rev. Barnardus Freeman became the second minister.

Mr. Freeman was, in addition to being the minister of the Church, missionary to the Mohawk Indians. This office of missionary to the Mohawks was not alone of religious importance, for it was as much the duty of the missionary to keep their allegiance to the King and especially to the Governor of the

Colony as it was to convert them. Mr. Freeman was a man of mature years and of studious habit. When he found how necessary it was to be able to preach and talk to the Mohawks in their own tongue, he set himself to learn the language. This he did and could write as well as speak it. He gained such a strong hold upon that sentiment in the Indians, which in a white man would be called affection, that after he had been away from Schenectady five years—his pastorate ended in 1705—they asked the Governor to appoint him to be located at their Castle.

The minister of Schenectady received a salary of \$250 a year in those days, with house and garden and pasture for his cows and horse, free. There was also a donation of sixty cords of fire wood. As there were not more than two hundred and fifty inhabitants in 1700 it will be seen that the pay of the minister was large when their number is considered, and of course, not all of these were adults.

In 1701, Governor Nanfan granted permission to the church to seek subscriptions from all over the Colony for the building of a new church, to replace the original one given by Mr. Glen, which was burned by the French and Indians in 1690. The money was obtained and the second church building was erected upon the site of the first, at the junction of State, Water and Church streets. It covered a ground space of forty-six by fifty-six feet and was finished before the end of 1703. It was used as a church till 1734 when it was given up by the congregation and was used as a fort.


Mr. Freeman's departure in 1705 was a serious event for the people, for besides everything else which made it desirable that he should remain, he had so far won the confidence of the Mohawks that he had considerable influence with them. For ten years, till 1715, the congregation had no minister settled over it, but in the ten years two ministers from Albany—the Revs. Johannes Lydius and Petrus Van Driessen; Petrus Vas, of Kingston; and Gaulterius DuBois, of New York, made twenty-

four visits to the church in Schenectady, one hundred and fifty-two children being christened, nineteen of the number being Indians.

The third minister was the Rev. Thomas Brouwer, his pastorate beginning in July, 1714. He was in charge of the congregation till his death on January 15, 1728.

The Rev. Reinhardus Erichzon was the fourth minister, his pastorate beginning on March 30, 1728, and ending in October, 1736. In his pastorate the vigorous little church became greatly increased in numbers and its finances were so much improved that



 *The Original Dutch Reformed Church.*

a really pretentious church building was erected and this was done without seeking aid from outside. This church building—shown in the picture—was built of stone at a cost of \$2,919.73.

one-third of that sum having been collected from the people of the valley. This was the third church building. It was situated at the junction of Union and Church streets in the center of the streets, not on a lot. The material was shale-like stone, bearing traces of sandstone, and was obtained near the village. The building was eighty by fifty-six feet.

In 1732 the work was begun by Hendrick Vrooman who was the "baas," (incidentally, this Dutch word is the origin of modern "boss" and it meant exactly the same thing in Dutch that it does to-day in English), and a considerable gang of workmen under him, seventeen of the whole number being carpenters. The record says that Vrooman received seven shillings and the other workmen from five to six shillings a day, but whether the shillings were Sterling or York is not stated. If the former, the pay was good, \$1.75 for the boss and \$1.25 and \$1.50 for the workmen, being higher than is paid to-day, everything considered. This church had a gambrel roof, a bell and clock tower and two entrances, one on the side toward the east facing Union street, and the other on the south end. The former was the main entrance and opposite it, high up against the wall on a single pedestal was the pulpit and directly over it was the sounding board. The arrangement gave the appearance of a gigantic jack-in-the-box when the preacher had mounted the steps to the barrel-shaped pulpit and the suspended sounding board resembled the lid. The curious old custom of separating the men from the women obtained. The men, being of finer clay (?), occupied raised seats along the sides of the church while the mothers, wives and daughters were seated on more lowly resting places in the body of the church, where the men could obtain a good raking view of them, but they could not look at the men without turning their heads. In front of the pulpit was a railed-off space where the minister stood when administering the sacrament of baptism.

The seats were rented to men for five shillings and to women for four shillings a year. A seat was the property of the person who paid the rent and it belonged to his heirs after



his death. Should the rent not be paid, the seat was re-let to someone else, the new occupant paying a fee of twelve shillings in addition to the annual payment. Failure to pay the rent was the only cause of forfeiture. In 1734 there were eighty-six men's seats and two hundred and eighteen women's. This causes one to wonder if the women were in that proportion in excess of the men, or if then as now, the women were chiefly the church goers.



*A Church "Furnace" of 200 years ago, in the Sanders Mansion.*

From the building of the church till fifty-eight years afterward there was no means of heating it in winter save by the old-fashioned foot-warmers, and these were only of good to the individual whose feet rested on one.

In 1740, the church had a bell and a clock in its tower. The bell was in use till 1848 when it was cracked and became useless.

On August 3, 1743 the church was chartered. The object of this was to give the congregation corporate powers in the matter of its real estate. For more than fifty years the church had been accumulating property, but the church as such could neither hold, sell nor purchase, as it had no legal existence, hence the charter.

For the four years after the Rev. Mr. Erickson left, the Church had no settled minister, but the sacraments were administered and the pulpit supplied, by two Albany ministers, the Reverends Van Schie and Van Dresser. In November, 1736, the Church sent to Holland for a minister, a salary of £100 a year being promised from the time he left Holland but, although two years were spent in an effort to secure a minister, the representatives of the Church were not successful. In November, 1738, Levinus Clarkson and John Livingston being in Holland, were authorized to make renewed efforts to secure a minister and another two years passed

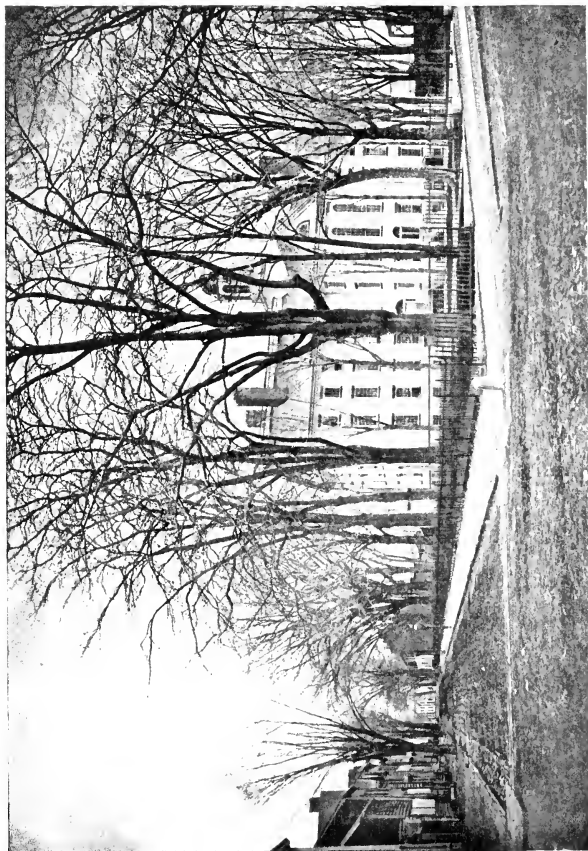
without anything being accomplished. The Church then determined to find a minister at home so, the Rev. Cornelis Van Santvoord was called from the Staten Island Dutch Reformed Church, where he had been settled for twenty-two years. The Staten Island Church demanded to be reimbursed for the expense of bringing Mr. Van Santvoord from Holland, the Schenectady Church objected but, finally, the matter was compromised and he came to Schenectady in August, 1740. His wife, who was a daughter of John Staats, of Staten Island, died in 1744, and Mr. Van Santvoord remarried in 1745, his second wife being Elizabeth Toll, of Schenectady. She died in 1747, childless. Mr. Van Santvoord was a man of cultivation and an excellent minister. He was a fluent speaker in the English, Dutch and French languages. In the twelve years he was pastor, the membership was increased by 151; 174 couple were married; 645 children were baptized. His death occurred suddenly, after but a week's illness, on January 6, 1752. Then there was another period in which the Church had no minister, this time for three years, the pulpit being occasionally supplied by the Revs. Theo. Frelinghuysen, of Albany, and Barent Vrooman, of New Platz.

The death of the minister, Mr. Van Santvoord, occurred in January, 1752 and from that date till 1755 the congregation was without a minister, the occasional preaching being done by ministers from Albany and other places. In 1753 a new parsonage was built on the same site, now the site of the church, as the former occupied. It was built of brick, two and a half stories high, the brick being made by Jacob Van Vorst.

On November 17, 1754, the Rev. Barent Vrooman was installed as the sixth minister of the church. Mr. Vrooman was born in Schenectady, on December 24, 1725, and was the great-grandson of the original settler of that name. He was the first person born in the Colony and the only one born in Schenectady, who became the minister of the church. He was the eleventh child of Wouter Vrooman, who was taken a captive to Canada, by the French, the day after the massacre of 1690.

Mr. Vrooman began his theological studies under the Rev. Cornelis Van Santvoord and finished them under the Rev. Theodore Frelinghuysen, of Albany. In 1751, he went to Holland to continue his theological education, in the University of Utrecht. He received his license to preach in January, 1752, and was ordained by the classis of Utrecht in March, 1753, and soon after returned to America. After a brief visit with relatives in Schenectady, he began his duties as minister, in New Platz, in August, 1753. The congregation included New Platz, Shawangunk and Wallkil and the parish extended over a territory of 200 square miles. The corner stone of the Dutch Reformed Church of New Platz was laid by Mr. Vrooman and the building is still worshipped in. In the month following his installation, as minister of the New Platz Church, the First Dutch Reformed Church of Schenectady gave him a call.

The official call to Schenectady was a long, complicated, complex affair, more like a legal document, drawn for the purpose of confusing and impressing the uninitiated, than a simple invitation from the congregation of a church, to a minister, to come there as its minister. The title of the call alone required forty-five words. The call proper, starts off with the seemingly before unknown fact, that the Supreme Being rules all things as He wills; that "His adorable good pleasure"—in causing the death of the pastor—is, "our great grief." It then pays several pretty compliments to Mr. Vrooman and his family and makes the rather ambiguous statement that the call was given to Mr. Vrooman "in fear of the Lord." The full official title of the Church is then given with the names of the members of the Consistory with the statement, that he was to administer his office in accordance with the rules of the Synod of Dordrecht. Thus the call was made, but by no means finished, for, then the business part of the transaction was taken up exhaustively. His "Reverence" was told what he will be expected to do and when he was to do it; how much his salary would be and the number and kind of his perquisites. Very near the end, he is given the following title,



*Old Union College Building, Present Site of Union School.*

which, if used while introducing several persons, would permit the first introduced to become decrepit before the last person had been presented. The title was: "The Reverend-pious-and-learned Barent Vrooman."

This by no means ended the complications of so simple a matter as the inviting of a man to become the minister of a church, for the expenses connected with a call were large. They were borne by the church which gave the call. In the case of the call to the Rev. Barent Vrooman, the Church paid £225 or \$563. The items will be of interest as showing how really serious a thing it was in those good old days to hire a new minister.

Cornelius Van Slyck and Isaac Vrooman were paid £5-12-0 for delivering the call.

Joseph R. Yates, for the use of his horse by Philip Reylic, for twelve days, while he was making inquiry in regard to the coming of Mr. Vrooman, was paid £1-4-0.

To Gerret H. Lansing and Joseph R. Yates \* \* \* sent to New York to request Do. Vrooman's dismissal by the Coetus there, in the presence of Do. Vrooman, which was fruitless, £6-8-0.

The "Skipper" was paid £1-13-0 for bringing Mr. Vrooman's goods from New York to Schenectady.

Abraham Mabie and Isaac Vrooman brought the new minister from New Platz to Schenectady and were paid £12-0-0, they having been gone sixteen days with their horses.

Claas Van Patten for shoeing a horse, £2-6-0.

It required three ministers to dismiss Mr. Vrooman and to write the call and they were paid £10-0-0 for so doing. Now this is probably the secret of the ponderousness of the call, for when three ministers put their heads together, they are apt to think in whole paragraphs.

£4-10-0 was paid for the hiring of a sloop to bring some of the new minister's goods up from Sopus.

Abraham Mabie's and Isaac Vrooman's traveling expenses were £2-7-2.

"To £50 in satisfaction of a horse from the churches for Do. Vrooman.

£19-14-0 were paid to the New Platz church and £66-6-0 to the churches of Shawangunk and Wallkil, and £43-0-0 to the New Platz Consistory, seemingly, because they had lost their minister.

The Rev. Barent Vrooman married Alida, a daughter of David Vander Heyden, of Albany, in January, 1760. Their three children were, David, Maria and Walterus. Mr. Vrooman was a man of commanding presence, being six feet, four and a half inches tall and was broad and finely proportioned. He was a forcible and vigorous preacher, who was so full of his subject and loved it so well, that his sermons were delivered without notes. He was warm hearted, affectionate and, as a preacher, possessed the power of appealing to the affectionate and emotional side of his auditors. In his social relations, he was genial and charming. A call from the dominie was a pleasure in each home of his parish and out of it. Mr. Vrooman's health failed in 1780, and four years later his condition was so serious that the Rev. Dirck Romeyn was called as assistant minister. Mr. Vrooman died in November, 1784, at the age of fifty-nine years. His wife survived him fifty years and died at the great age of 99, in 1823.

The successor of the Rev. Barent Vrooman was his assistant, the Rev. Dirck Romeyn, who came to Schenectady in August, 1784, and was the seventh minister. With him came new customs and ideas in the Church and City. In the Church, the Dutch language divided the honors in the service and preaching, with the English language. The minister's salary was considerably increased and a second minister was called, as the parish was so large and the parishioners so widely scattered. In the city, great advancement was made in the schools and general educational interests, chiefly through the personal efforts of Mr. Romeyn.

Dirck Romeyn was born in that old Dutch village of Hackensack, New Jersey. His early education was obtained under the instruction of his older brother, the Rev. Thomas Romeyn, who

was minister of the Dutch Reformed Churches on the Delaware, and under that of the Rev. Dr. J. H. Goetschius, of Hackensack. With these two tutors he prepared for Princeton College, entered in 1763, and was graduated in 1765. In his seventeenth year he became a church member and decided upon the ministry as his life's work. His examination in theology lasted for two days and resulted in his ordination in May, 1766, by the Revs. J. H. Goetsching and John Schureman, as minister of the united churches of Rochester, Marbletown and Wawarsinck. He remained there throughout the Revolutionary war, a staunch patriot and fearless champion of the principle of no taxation without representation.

After peace with the old country had been declared, in 1784, Mr. Romeyn was formally called to Schenectady, and a good thing it was for Schenectady that he was called, for Union College was located in Schenectady through his efforts. His salary was \$350, house, pasture for two cows and a horse and seventy cords of fire wood delivered on his premises. The salary was increased to \$500 in 1796, and in 1798 to \$625, on account of the high cost of living.

Mr. Romeyn was large like his predecessor, Mr. Vrooman, stately in manner with a dignified and pleasing presence. Unlike Mr. Vrooman, Mr. Romeyn was governed by his intellect rather than his heart and as a preacher he appealed more to the mind than to the emotions, but at the same time, his eloquence often had a powerful effect upon his auditors.

Within a few months after his installation Mr. Romeyn began to devote his great energy to the improvement of the educational interests of the city. That the Schenectady Academy was begun in 1785, was almost entirely due to his efforts.

In 1794, the membership of the church was so large, it being the only Reformed Church in the town, and the territory covered by the homes of the members, being so extensive, that one minister could not attend to all of the pastoral duties, so an assistant was called. The pay was a salary of \$500, pasture for

two cows and a horse, or, in lieu \$62 yearly, and half the perquisites of the office.

The Rev. Nicholas Van Vranken, of Fishkill, was called but he refused, because a house was not included. Jacob Sickles, a theological student was appointed. He began his duties in October, 1795, and ended them in the summer of 1797. From this year till 1802, Mr. Romeyn was without an assistant. In 1802 Mr. Romeyn's health had so greatly failed that, by mutual consent, his salary was reduced to \$520 a year and he was only required to preach once on Sunday, in the Dutch language. In the spring of 1802, the Rev. J. H. Meier, of New Platz was called as assistant. Mr. Romeyn died in 1804, at the age of sixty. His wife, Elizabeth Broadhead, died in 1815, at the age of seventy-four. Their son, the Rev. John B. Romeyn, was pastor of the Cedar Street Church, in New York and their daughter, Catherin, married Caleb Beck, of Schenectady.

It has been said, that in Mr. Romeyn's pastorate the church service was in both Dutch and English. In February, 1794, the Consistory resolved, that, so long as there were twenty-five supporting families in the Church who understood Dutch better than any other language, the sermon should be in Dutch at one service and in English at the other, and that the weekly evening lecture should be in a different language from the Sunday evening sermon.

This was caused by the growing popularity of English. The majority of the younger portion of the congregation understood and spoke English better than they did Dutch. In the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches the service was, of course, in English and it was feared that that fact would attract the young people. The older members were so intensely Dutch that the English sermon did not give great satisfaction so, five months later, the resolution adopted by the Consistory was changed, so that the sermon should be in English every alternate Sunday at one of the two day services and that the Sunday evening sermon should be in English.



In March, 1798, the young people were again flirting with the Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches. This caused the older people to conclude to violate their feeling and ears by listening more frequently to sermons preached in English. The clerk was required to hire an English clerk, at his own expense, to serve on the days when the service was in that language. In 1799, wonder of wonders, Mr. Yates was authorized to purchase eight English Bibles and half of the service for two successive Sundays was to be in English and on the third Sunday, entirely in Dutch. Those persons who are acquainted with the tenacity of purpose of the descendants of those fine old Dutchmen and women, may guess that the third Sunday was anticipated with as great eagerness as the newly admitted attorney anticipates his first fee.

It may be remarked parenthetically, that it is extremely odd that, since their grand, and great-grand parents were so passionately, almost stubbornly devoted to the mother-tongue, there is not one of their descendants living in Schenectady in 1904 who can read the letters and documents, written in the Dutch language years ago—and there is many a chest full of them in many an attic—or speak the Dutch language of those days. There is a bit of subtile humor in the fact, that the only person in Schenectady, living in the past decade, who was at all proficient in reading the old Dutch, was a Scotchman, the late Alexander Thomson.

After the death of Mr. Romeyn, the Rev. John H. Meier became the minister of the Church. Mr. Meier was born in Pompton, New Jersey, in October, 1774. He was graduated from Columbia College in 1795 and studied theology with the Rev. Dr. Livingston. In 1798, he was licensed to preach and was called to the New Platz Church, New Platz seemingly being a training school for Schenectady ministers. In 1802, he was called to Schenectady, as Mr. Romeyn's assistant and in 1804, he became the minister. His pay was a salary of \$662.50 a year with a house, but nothing was mentioned about pasturage for cows and a horse, nor of wood.

Mr. Meier was a young man of agreeable manners, who was

well liked out of the congregation as well as in it, notwithstanding the fact that he was rather reserved. He was notable for his veneration and sympathy. His death occurred at the end of his second year as pastor, in 1806, at the age of thirty-two.

For two years after the death of Mr. Meier the Church was without a minister, the pulpit being supplied by men from other places. In July, 1807, a son of a former minister, the Rev. John B. Romeyn, was called, but he did not accept the call with its house, firewood and \$1,000 a year.

In 1808, the Rev. Cornelius Bogardus, was called and accepted. Mr. Bogardus was born in September, 1780. He, too, was one of the Rev. Dr. Livingston's students. He was installed as minister of the First Reformed Church, of Schenectady, in November, 1808, that being his first parish. He was a man of fine presence and, although not the equal of some of his predecessors as a speaker, he was considered a strong preacher and, had he lived, would probably have become noted. He died in December, 1812, at the age of thirty-two. It was in his pastorate that the church building was first used for the Fourth of July celebration. This was in 1811. In granting the request for the use of the building, the Consistory stipulated that there should be no instrumental music, nor anything said which would give offence to any political party.

The Rev. Dr. Jacob Van Vechten was the next minister, his pastorate beginning in 1815. Up to his coming, there had been no long terms as ministers of the Church, but in his case, it was different, for his pastorate continued for thirty-four years. Mr. Van Vechten was born in Catskill, in September, 1788. He was a descendant of the first settler, Teunis Dirkse Van Vechten, who came to the Dutch Colony in America, with his wife, one child and two servants, in 1638. In 1648, he owned a farm in Greenbush, opposite Albany.

Dr. Van Vechten's early education was obtained in Catskill and later in the Kingston Academy. He prepared for Union College with the Rev. Alexander Miller, a former minister of

the Presbyterian Church, in Schenectady. Dr. Van Vechten entered Union in 1805, and was graduated in 1809. When he entered college, he intended to study law and so, soon after being graduated, he entered the office of his uncle, Abraham Van Vechten, of Albany. He gave up the law in a few months and began to study for the ministry, in the Theological Seminary of the Scotch Church, under the Rev. Dr. J. M. Mason, of New York, and later, in New Brunswick Theological Seminary. In 1814, he was licensed to preach.

Mr. Van Vechten was married twice—his first wife was Miss Catherin Mason, a daughter of his preceptor, and the second was, Miss Van Dyck, daughter of Abraham Van Dyck, of Coxackie. Mr. Van Vechten was not robust, as a youth, and as time went on, his health did not improve. In 1823, he went to Europe and was gone a year and returned somewhat improved in health. Williams College gave him the degree of D. D., and in 1837, he was senior trustee of Union College. In 1849, his lack of health caused his resignation. From that time, till his death in 1871, he devoted himself to literature.

In 1792 Mr. and Mrs. Nicholas Van der Volgen presented the Church with several fine, large chandeliers of brass and the same year a great innovation was made in an attempt to heat the church. The attempt was as great a failure as it was great in its novelty. In December of that year two stoves were purchased and placed in the church, not on the floor, but on two platforms as high as the gallery, their knowledge of thermotics being, not only primitive but upside down. They evidently believed that heat waves descended. The result was, that while the boys and negro slaves in the gallery were hot the congregation down on the floor of the church were cold. Finally the stoves were lowered to the floor where they gave satisfaction. In 1797, Mr. and Mrs. Van der Volgen again showed their generosity by giving to the Church money for the purchase of an organ. This money was left to accumulate till about 1826 when an organ was purchased from Henry Urban, of New York, at a cost of \$1,000



1870. State Street, Below Ferry.

The duties of the klokluyster, or sexton, were to ring the bell, as the word klokluyster signifies, to keep the interior of the church in proper order and to dig graves and fill them in after the burial ceremony. The dual office of "voorlezer" and "voorsanger" was united in the person of the clerk. The duties of this person were fixed and defined by the consistory. Generally speaking, he opened the service by reading the commandments, a chapter from the Bible and a hymn or psalm, in the morning, and in the afternoon substituting the creed for the commandments, otherwise the same form was carried out. In addition, this voor-person had "the right and emoluments of burying the dead of the congregation." This could not have been any very great source of income for those old Dutchmen were slow-livers and long-livers and the habit acquired then obtains to-day.

The First Reformed Church has ever been the exponent of good music in Schenectady. In 1794 the Consistory adopted a resolution which would have the effect of improving the singing and increasing the number of singers. This was to be accomplished by Cornelius DeGraaf, the chorister, who should urge parents to send their children to him for instruction, at the rate of thirty-five cents a month to which would be added an equal sum by the Consistory. Then the Consistory then tacked on to the resolution a "rider" in which was all the meat of the purpose of the resolution. It was that Mr. DeGraaf should try to keep better time and that he should "soften his voice as much as possible." There is a tradition that when Mr. DeGraaf sat on his back stoop expanding the atmosphere by "singing psalms to beguile the evening hours, his voice could be clearly heard two miles up the river in a straight line." When it is remembered that this volume of sound progressed *up* the river against a four mile current, the value of such a voice in the person of a twentieth-century campaign "orator" must be appreciated and the sufferings of his friends and neighbors may be guessed at.

In 1805, the church, which stood in the middle of the junction of Union and Church streets, was in need of repair and too,

the fact that it was in the street was considered to be an evidence of lack of progress. Nothing definite was done till 1810 when the Consistory appointed a committee to investigate the feasibility of repairing the church and another committee to draw plans for a new church. The new church building was decided upon, not however, without opposition and heart burnings on the parts of those who clung to the old church through sentiment and affection, they having taken part in the sacrifices and struggles for its erection. There was also opposition from those who felt that the new building should be located further east, as the city had grown in that direction. The site finally settled upon was what was known as the old parsonage lot and is the site of the present handsome church building.

Before the site had been settled upon the Great Consistory had determined that a satisfactory manner for deciding whether the old church should be repaired, or a new one built would be, that if subscriptions for \$4,000 were obtained within four weeks from the date of the meeting of the Great Consistory, a new church should be built; if that sum was not subscribed, then the old church should be repaired. This resulted in the subscription of \$3,379.50 in cash and 243 days of work.

The land upon which the first church was built by Alexander Lindsey Glen, in the little square at the end of Church street, on State street, and the site of the second church building, at the junction of Church and Union streets, still belonged to the Church. It was decided to sell these sites to the city, to be dedicated to the use of the public forever, to help the building operations. The price paid, was 200 acres of land worth at least \$10 an acre. On December 3, 1812, the contracts for the new church building was signed. The contract for the mason work and material was let to David Hearsey and Thomas McCully, for \$4,570; the contract for carpenter work and finishing was let to Joseph Horsfall and Garret Benson for \$5,800.

The site of the new church was on property which had been used by the Church and was known as the parsonage lot, at the

north-east corner of Union and Church streets, where the present really beautiful and dignified church stands. The ground area was 57 by 96 feet. It was a plain building built of brick with a tower and cupola on the Union street front. The main entrance was in the tower and there were two other doors, one on either side of the tower directly opposite the ends of the aisles. The bell of the old church hung in the belfry. At this period of the Church's history, English customs were rapidly supplanting the good old Dutch customs, which were rather conservative; so, instead of separating the sexes, as was the Dutch custom, the seats were arranged without regard to sex. The floor of the church was divided by three aisles; one, broad and in the middle, with pews on either side, and two narrower side aisles, separating the pews from family "slips" which were against the side walls and "fenced" in, as was the old custom. The gallery was over the main entrance. In it were the choir and organ, seats for casual worshipers and for negroes. The pulpit was against the wall opposite the gallery. On November 20, 1814, the last service was held in the old building.

This must have been a solemn and, for the older members of the congregation, a sad event. The building they were about to abandon was the link connecting the ancient with the beginning of the modern. It was built in 1734 and worshipped in by many persons who were children, or who were born when the original fifteen settlers began the town, in 1662. The church about to be given up, had been the house of worship in the stirring times of the French and Indian War, and the funerals of those who were killed in the Beukendaal fight were held in it. Then came the terrible times of the Revolution, when many a self-sacrificing patriot was carried on the shoulders of his neighbors to his grave, from this old church. But, in 1812, the United States of America was progressing by leaps and leaps. The young State rather scorned the ancient Colony. The Nation felt itself to be very strong and big and it was about to prove that this feeling was an actual condition by entering for the second time into a war with

its grand old parent, Great Britain. So, while the oldsters were weeping because the "king is dead" the youngsters were enthusiastically shouting, "long live the king."

The old church of 1734 was sold to Henry Yates and Charles Kane for—a mess of pottage—\$442.50.

The destruction of the church building of 1814, in 1861, has been described under the caption of Calamities. After this fire,



*The First Dutch Reformed Church.*

a portion of the congregation advocated rebuilding and enlarging upon the old walls left standing, but they were comparatively few. The members who looked toward the future advocated the erection of an entirely new building. It is only necessary to look at the beauty and dignity of the present church building to appreciate how great would have been Schenec-

tady's loss, had the advocates of rebuilding upon the old walls carried the day. The First Dutch Reformed Church of Schenectady is among the finest specimens of perfect, dignified ecclesiastical architecture in the United States. No individual has done more for Schenectady than its architect, Edward Tuckerman



Potter. It is a church building that will be appropriate, dignified and beautiful for all time. Although there is nothing ancient about this building, except the Church organization—which came into existence 224 years ago—a description of it will be given, which is taken from one published at the time the building was completed.

The church and consistory room form two sides of a square, with the opening of the angle opposite the corner of Union and Church streets, the entrance to the consistory room being from Church street and that to the church, from Union street. In the angle, stands the tower, topped by a lofty spire which, with the tower, is 170 feet high. The outside measurements, including the buttresses, on the ground are: 113 feet north and south by 116 feet east and west.

It is built of a purplish-gray stone with trimmings, chiefly of Connecticut brown stone and other varieties, in composition and color. The tracery of the large rose window over the main entrance is of Caen stone. At either side of the main entrance, or Congregation's door, are polished shafts of red granite resting upon bases, and with capitals of Nova Scotia stone. The capitals are carved in bold relief with representations of the productions of the soil of the Mohawk valley. Over the door is carved the text from the Bible: "I have brought in the first fruits of the land, which thou, O Lord, hast given me."

In accord with a very old Dutch custom one of the side entrances is call the Bride's door. Over this door is a small triplet window with small shafts of polished marble, the capitals of which are carved to represent orange blossoms. Over the door is the legend: "His banner over me was Love." The other minor entrance, on the eastern side, is called "Forefather's door" and the text carved over it is: "The Lord our God be with us as He was with our fathers.

The interior dimensions are: The church proper, 60 by 100 feet; consistory room 30 by 50 feet; tower, 16 by 16 feet. The church and consistory room have open-timbered roofs. The

organ and choir are behind the pulpit. Opposite the pulpit, over the main entrance, is a small gallery, only used when the occasion attracts more persons than can be seated in the body of the church.

The consistory room opens into the church at the end near the pulpit and choir. A massive screen of carved black-walnut and plate glass separates the church from the room. This screen is 30 feet wide and 40 feet high. The pulpit is made of veined green, variegated yellow and mottled dark red marbles, that were quarried on the Jura Alps, in France, and are encased in black walnut. The carvings on the pulpit are ornate; the text is "We preach Christ crucified." The rose window at the south, has the arms of the Dutch Reformed Church and two windows in the consistory room have the arms of the Clute and Cuyler families. The four stained windows of the tower have representations of the four previous church buildings. The sill of the gate, in front of the "Bride's door" is the threshold of the old church of 1734. There are many more fine carvings and texts than have been mentioned.

There are few, if any, churches in New York, which possessed in so early a day so much land as did the First Dutch Reformed Church of Schenectady. 1740 it owned twelve square miles of land. This property, if still in the possession of the Church, would be of great value, but it is not. Much of it was sold for the running expenses of the Church and some of it was given to the friends and relatives of influential members of the congregation, just as the same thing would be done in the twentieth century.

Besides the property at State and Water streets, where the original church building stood and that at the junction of Union and Church streets, where the third church stood, the Church owned by bequest from Van Valsen, his valuable mill property fronting on State street and bounded on the south by Mill lane, about six acres in all. All of these properties were in the village.

Out of the village there was the "Poor Pasture" lying between the line of Front street and the river in the neighborhood, probably,

of the canal and New York Central Railroad. The east and west boundaries given mean nothing to the present generation, so the general location is all that can be given. The boundaries were: "the Fonda place on the west and College creek on the east, which in those days was called "Hansen kil." This property included thirty-six acres. In 1806 the Church bought sixteen acres to the east of the "Poor Pasture" for \$1,750, from Harmanus Van Slyck. In 1863 the fifty-two acres were sold for \$11,000. The "Poor Pasture" was given to the Church by Hans Janse Eenkluyt, a soldier in the employ of the Dutch West India Company. He was in Schenectady in 1668 and died there in 1683. In 1714 the Church obtained possession of what was known as the Sixth Flat, seven miles from the village on the north bank of the Mohawk, east of the Verfkil, or Paint creek, not far from Hoffman's Ferry. The property included fourteen acres of the flats and twenty acres of woodland just back of it. In the same year the Church obtained possession of a piece of woodland on what is now the road to the Aqueduct, at a point opposite the lower bridge. In 1638 the Church obtained by patent 2,421 acres in Niskayuna which was increased in 1754 by 1,200, making in all 3,621 acres.





1870. Present Location of the Y. M. C. A.

## Chapter VI. Churches.

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### ST. GEORGE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH.



SOON after the Colony of New Amsterdam became the Colony of New York, in 1664, the necessity for the Established Church, or more properly a church of the Anglican Communion of the Catholic Church, in Schenectady, began to be felt for, with the British occupation of this Colony, many English families came here from the New England Colonies, and many discharged soldiers became settlers. There were also British garrisons near, the soldiers of which married into Dutch families of the valley.

For many years there were occasional English chaplains here, but not even a mission church. After the close of the French and Indian war, in 1754, there were few soldiers stationed near Schenectady, and the few settlers, who were Churchmen, were obliged to build a church for themselves. The foundations were laid in 1759, but the building was delayed for years, because of the small number of persons who had to bear the expense. In 1765, fifty-five persons in Schenectady signed a petition asking for a mission to help them to complete the work which had been started. In 1771, there were eighty adult church members in Schenectady and this number was somewhat increased in the winter by the Indian traders who came here for headquarters, or returned from the Great Lakes to their homes.

Samuel Fuller, a Yankee from Needham, Massachusetts, who was master of the King's artificers, came here to have charge of the wood work, and he eventually became the builder of the church. As late as 1762, three years after the laying of the

foundations, Fuller was obliged to return to Needham to secure several carpenters as there was, apparently, no one in this old Dutch village who could do the work. Besides their wages, these men were allowed pay for the fourteen days required in coming here and returning to their homes.

Sir William Johnson was a good friend of the struggling parish and subscribed liberally from his private purse, and on one occasion he raised from his friends and the Governors of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the then very considerable sum of \$357, toward the building fund. It was chiefly through his efforts that a charter for the church was obtained from the Governor of the Colony, in 1766. Sir William frequently attended service in St. George's and tradition says that his pew, which was on the south side, was covered by a canopy.

There are two odd legends connected with the earliest days of the church which show, in a striking manner, that inaccuracies were indulged in in those far off days as freely as they are now.

It seems that the Presbyterians having no church of their own and, like the Episcopalians, not enough money among themselves to build one, united with the latter in subscribing money for the erection of St. George's, the understanding being, that both denominations should worship in the church on different occasions. There were two doors in those days, one on the west and the other on the south side of the church. It was agreed that the Episcopalians should use the west door and the Presbyterians the south door. John Brown, to whose memory there is a tablet in the wall of the present church and who was an earnest worker for the parish, went to New York secretly and got the Bishop to consecrate the church without the knowledge of the Presbyterians. Of course they were outraged that such an act should be done when they had subscribed liberally, in proportion to their means. But the fact of the matter is, nothing of the kind happened, for there was no Episcopal Bishop in the Colonies till thirty years after the supposed consecration, and furthermore, St. George's Church was not consecrated by anyone till 1859, when it was done by Bishop Potter.

The other legend is to the effect, that when the south, or Presbyterian door was walled up, the plaster would not stick and the Presbyterians accounted for this by saying: "It was because the Lord had put a curse upon it."

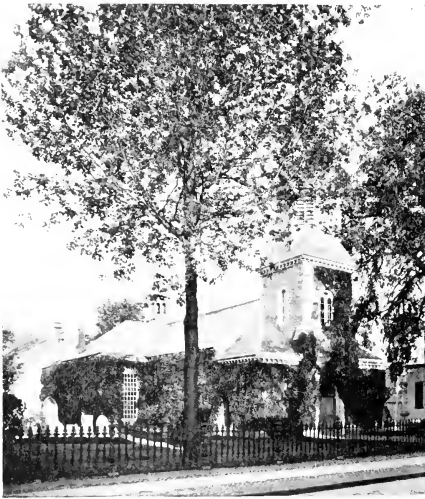
As nearly as can be ascertained, the Rev. Thomas Barclay, an Episcopal missionary in Albany, was the first minister to conduct the Episcopal service in Schenectady, but this was in 1710, many years before the church was thought of.

In 1748 a youth of twenty-one, John W. Brown, came to Schenectady from London, and was afterward, to the end of his days known as the "Father of the Parish" because of his life-long work for the parish, which only ended with his death at the age of eighty-seven. There is a tradition that the name, St. George, was given to the church by him. The first baptism according to the ritual of the Episcopal Church, occurred in 1754, when Mr. Brown's little daughter was baptized, the sacrament being administered by the Rev. John Ogilvie, rector of St. Peter's in Albany, who came to Schenectady for such occasions and to conduct the service, several times a year.

The first resident rector of St. George's Church was probably William Andrews, who was a religious teacher to the Mohawk Indians. Mr. Andrews finally returned to his home in London so that he could be ordained by the Bishop of London, whose See included this part of the Colonies, and then he was appointed rector of St. George's. This was in 1770. The Rev. William Andrews was a hard worker, not only in parish work but in school work as well. In 1771 he established a grammar school. This school and the hard parish work so broke Mr. Andrew's health that he was obliged to resign in 1773, when he went to Virginia. This was the first school of importance in Schenectady.

Some idea of the hardihood of the early settlers and of the toil and hardships they bore, as a matter of course, may be had when it is known that there was considerable difficulty in paying the rector's salary and that the reason given was, "So many of the parishioners are Indian traders who go to the Great Lakes and

sometimes do not return for a year." The journey by canoe with long, tedious carries was more of an undertaking and more dangerous than would be a journey to-day to Lake Nyanza in the heart of Africa. These men traded for furs with the Indians and hunted and trapped as well. When they had obtained as many pelts as could be brought back, they returned to their homes and the pelts were mostly disposed of to the Sanders, of New York, Albany and Scotia, who did a business of a million or more yearly.



*St. George's Episcopal Church.*

When the war with the Mother Country broke out the Rev. John Doty, a graduate of Columbia College (then called King's College) was rector of St. George's Church. This war made the position of the Episcopal clergy most trying. They were supported, in part if not entirely, from the old country and they felt that an ecclesiastical obli-

gation made the prayers for the King and Royal family a moral necessity. This caused suspicion on the part of the Colonists who, by the conditions were made even more suspicious than they were naturally, and so Mr. Doty, with many other rectors, was imprisoned for a while. When he was released he went to Canada, and for the remainder of the Revolutionary War there was no service in the church.



When peace was declared, the church edifice was in a bad condition and the parishioners were scattered, or had been killed in battle. Then it was that John Brown, "the father of the parish," and Charles Martin made liberal subscriptions and secured other subscriptions from Churchmen for its renovation. About 1790 the parish was admitted to the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church.

In 1798, St. George's parish began a new life which was more or less prosperous and has continued so from that year to the present. That same year the Rev. Robert G. Wetmore became joint rector of Christ Church, in Duanesburg and of St. George's in this city. At this time the church was only fifty-six by thirty-six feet with three windows on each side, the south door of the Presbyterians' being walled up. There was a small steeple of wood in the middle of the front and the pulpit, against the east wall, was reached by a long flight of steps. Mr. Wetmore resigned in 1801 and for several years thereafter St. George's Church was without a rector.

There were two dissenters who became identified with the Church in this city, especially with St. George's: David Hearsay, a Congregationalist from New England, and the Rev. Cyrus Stebbins, a Methodist minister of Albany, who was ordained by Bishop Moore. Mr. Stebbins was rector of St. George's Church from 1806 to 1819.

From 1821 to 1836 the Rev. A. P. Proal was rector and it was in his rectorship that the most notable improvements were made, up to that time. The Wendell house was purchased for the rectory. This property was just north of the church and adjoining it and the property is still the site of the rectory. More pews were added and side galleries were put up to accommodate the growing congregation. In 1838, when the Rev. Dr. Smede was rector, the two transepts were added; a great pulpit, way up in the air, was put in with a cellar-like hole under it, into which the rector disappeared when the time came to change from surplice to black robe, just before the sermon. In our day the

popping down and then up would be the cause of considerable levity with its suggestiveness of a human jack-in-the-box, but the early settlers were so much given to toil and rest, with very much more of the toil than rest, that they saw little of the humorous side of life, or if they saw it, they failed to recognize it. The Peek house, immediately adjoining the church yard on the south, was purchased at this time, and was used as a house for the sexton and for the Sunday school. This property is still owned by the Church.

The other rectors were: The Rev. William H. Walter, from 1839 to '42; the Rev. Dr. John Williams, from 1842 to '48. Dr. Williams later became the beloved Bishop of Connecticut; and in 1848 the Rev. Dr. William Payne became its rector.

#### PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

After the "Piskerbals," as the Episcopalians were called in old days and are still called in some parts of New England, had closed the south, or Presbyterian door of St. George's Church, the Presbyterians worshiped in rented quarters. It was not till 1770 that a minister was regularly settled here, although it is probable that missionaries from Albany officiated occasionally. As has been mentioned elsewhere, they worshiped in St. George's Church for some time.

It is most unfortunate for us of to-day, that there is no record, nor even tradition, where the site of the first church was. The church, wherever it was, was built by John Hall and Samuel Fuller, at an expense to the congregation, including the lot, of \$1,800. The frame was "raised" on June 1 and 2, 1770, and the building finished in 1771. There were forty-three pews and a gallery. The first settled minister was the Rev. Alexander Miller, who was a graduate of Princeton in the class of 1764, and studied theology under the Rev. Dr. Rodgers, of New York. Mr. Miller received in 1767 his license to preach, was ordained in 1770 and was immediately settled over the congregation. He had also,

outlying congregations at Currie's—or Cory's—Bush, now Princeton, and at Remsen's Bush. At this time, William White was deacon and James Schnyler, James Wilson, and Andrew McFarlan were elders. In the absence of Mr. Miller, in 1771, the Rev. Eliphalet Ball, of Bedford, New York, preached as supply. Mr. Ball became so greatly pleased with the country about Schenectady, that he and a portion of his congregation settled in Ballston, in 1788, and Ballston was so called in honor of Mr. Ball.

The Rev. Alexander Miller left Schenectady in 1781. He was succeeded by the Rev. John Young, who was ordained, about a year later, on June 14, 1788, and included Currie's Bush in his ministerial duties. The church membership was small and the members not burdened with money; so when Mr. Miller severed his connection with it, there was a considerable sum still due him on his salary.

In 1790, the Rev. Mr. Young requested that his resignation be accepted—the reason given, being that his health was impaired and that his salary was unpaid for some time. This was on November 10. The congregation was somewhat disrupted about this time by the contention of two factions in the Church. The evangelical idea, which was gaining strength in the Church, was bitterly opposed by those who favored formalism. This contention, taken together with Mr. Young's request, resulted in his dismissal, on December 9, 1790.

From 1791 to 1795, the pulpit was supplied, occasionally, by ten or twelve different ministers. When the Rev. J. B. Smith was elected president of Union College, he took a hand in the affairs of the struggling church, and, metaphorically, put it on its feet for the time being. On September 13, 1796, the Rev. Robert Smith, of Pennsylvania, was called to the pastorate and was installed. Unfortunately for the Church, Mr. Smith's health broke down and in 1801, he went to Savannah hoping to recover his strength; but he died not long after his arrival. Mr. Smith was a worker and a man who was possessed of qualities which particularly fitted him for his chosen calling and for the pastorate

of this Church. Under his pastorate, the membership was increased from thirty-seven to eighty-eight. The annual income of the Church at this time was \$700.

The loss of Mr. Smith's influence and wise management gave occasion for the restless ones of the congregation to again indulge in that Scotchman's delight—"a wee bit daunder." The Rev. William Clarkson was installed in March, 1802, by the Presbytery, upon petition of seventy-six members of the congregation, which number included three elders; but this was opposed by a minority petition, signed by twenty members, including two elders. The minority accused Mr. Clarkson of really shocking crimes—the most serious being that "he read his sermons." It mattered not to the old-time Presbyterian, especially if he were Scotch, if the minister wrote out and learned by heart, his sermon, so long as he spoke it without notes or manuscript. The reading of a sermon was a sin they could not tolerate. It seems that the Presbytery did not agree with the minority, and Mr. Clarkson was retained. This resulted in the withdrawal of twenty-four families from the congregation and the acquisition of a number of new members. An election of elders increased the quarrel and, finally, politics had so far taken possession of the congregation to the exclusion of Christianity, that Mr. Clarkson resigned in September, 1803.

In December of the same year, the son of Rev. Dr. Romeyn, of the old First Dutch Reformed Church, the Rev. J. B. Romeyn, became pastor at a salary of \$625, but politics still held possession of the members and he left in November, 1804. This strife was not only disrupting the congregation, but was also minimizing the finances—the rent, received for pews, being but \$35. Nathaniel Todd tried his luck, in December, 1805, and was dismissed, by the Presbytery, in November of the same year, because the Church could not support a minister.

An Irishman named John Joyce, who was a lay preacher in the Methodist faith, so pleased the congregation, or, at least, a considerable portion of it, that the Presbytery was asked to appoint

him minister. It refused and requested the resignation of the session and the election of a new one, in the hope of bettering the conditions. In 1809, the foundations for a new church were laid, which would make it appear that, while there was money for a church, there was none for a minister. While the new church was being built—on the site of the chapel which had been taken down—the congregation, seemingly, continued the strife on week days and worshiped in the College Chapel on Sundays. Dr. Eliphalet Nott had been president of Union College for five years at this time, and he did much to smooth matters for the disrupted congregation. It is probable that the somewhat odd arrangement of the gallery of this new church was a sort of acknowledgement of that fact. This gallery was in the form of a horseshoe and, at the ends, above and near the pulpit-platform, were inclines, down which the students of the graduating-class walked to receive their diplomas from the hands of the president, when they ascended to the gallery on the other side, up the other incline. This proceeding must have been a source of delight to the “kid” portion of the audience at Commencement, if any of them were admitted in those days, on account of its circus-like appearance.

For the succeeding six years, there was an absence of strife. In this period, the Rev. Alexander Montieth was minister. His pastorate began on August 29, 1809, and continued till his death, on January 29, 1815. His salary was raised from \$700 to \$1,000, and sixty-two new communicants were added.

The next minister was the Rev. Hooper Cummings, “whose eloquence,” to quote a previous writer, “covered not a few of his own sins and other mens’ sermons.” In his brief pastorate, lasting from November, 1815, to February, 1817, sixty-five communicants were added. For three years, the Church was without a minister and a few persons withdrew from membership. The preaching was done by President Nott and Dr. McAuley of the College, while the Church was without a settled minister.

From 1820 to 1826 the Rev. Walter Montieth was minister. It was in his pastorate that a curious old custom, founded upon

"holier-then-thou" bigotry, was discontinued. This was the communion "token." It was made of pewter or lead, about an inch square, inscribed, on one side, with the name of the church and on the other, with the numerals of texts. Without one of these "tokens" no repentant sinner, who wished to confess his sins and obtain spiritual strength for a more determined fight against sin, could partake of the sacrament. In March, 1821, the very straight and painfully narrow path, only wide enough for a Presbyterian, was widened so that Christians could walk, side by side, to the communion table.

Another broadening of constricted ideas took place at this time in the building—the Session House. There was, however, strong opposition by such members of the congregation as were still struggling singly up the narrow path to Paradise; for they regarded Sunday schools as something to be shunned and prayer-meetings, with suspicion. In the twentieth century it hardly seems credible that, less than one hundred years ago, there were Presbyterians built upon such slender lines.

From 1826 to 1832, the Rev. Drs. Erskine and William Jones were the minister and "stated supply," respectively. On December 6, 1832 the Church began a new life; a life so broad and benevolent, that the old-time strife was impossible to longer continue; for it was on that date that the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Trumbull Backus was ordained and installed the church's minister. He continued, as such, till 1873. During these forty-one years the temporal and spiritual wealth of the Church constantly grew and it has continued to do so to the present time. While Dr. Backus was minister, one thousand communicants were added and \$160,000 were distributed. In 1834, the church building was enlarged; in 1843, the chapel was built; in 1857, the session-room was added; and, in 1859, the church building was again enlarged. Dr. Backus was succeeded, in 1873, by the Rev. Dr. Timothy G. Darling.

## METHODIST CHURCH.

The origin of the Methodist Church, in Schenectady, was in 1767, when Captain Thomas Webb went to Schenectady from Albany. This Captain Webb was an officer in the British Army, who had been licensed to preach by John Wesley, as a local preacher. He arrived in New York on orders from his superiors and was assigned to military duty in Albany. As nearly as can be ascertained, he was the first person, of the Methodist faith, to visit Schenectady.

With the religious energy of his faith, he began to preach and to teach the scriptures, in a building used for making flour, on the east side of Church street, not far from Union street, and also, in the home of Giles Van Vorst, on Union street. The people were as curious, in those days, as they are now, when anything unusual is to be seen or heard, especially in religious matters, and it, surely, was an unusual sight to see a British officer, preaching in uniform, wearing his side-arms, or his sword, lying on the table in front of him. As the late Judge John Sanders expressed it, with great force and elegance: "The people went to hear him, out of curiosity; but were not unfrequently wounded by the sword of the Spirit, which he wielded with great power." Among the persons who were first attracted, then convicted of sin, and, finally, converted to the doctrines of the Methodist Church, were Giles Brower, Nicholas Van Patten, Rachel Barhydt and Mrs. Giles Van Vorst, in whose home he preached.

Three years after the advent of Captain Thomas Webb, in 1770, the great George Whitfield—great, out of Methodism, as well as in it—preached in Schenectady, as the second pastor of the small but growing Church. This was on the occasion of his last tour of America, and the people crowded the place of worship, without regard to denomination or creed. Benjamin Akin, a local preacher of the Methodist Church, a resident of Schenectady, was asked by some persons, who had heard him, to preach to them. In January, 1807, he began his preaching in the home of

Richard Clute, on Green street. His manner was so earnest and convincing, that, in the first year, the fourteen or fifteen persons became converted to Methodism.

The Rev. Andrew McKean, pastor in charge of the Albany circuit, went to Schenectady and organized the Methodists into a society and established the first Methodist Church in Schenectady, in April, 1807. At the conference of May 2, of that same year, the Schenectady circuit was organized and Samuel Howe was appointed the preacher. This circuit included, besides the city, portions of the neighboring country. Mr. Howe preached in Schenectady once in four weeks, in the home of Richard Clute, at first, and later, in a house on Liberty street.

Mr. Howe was succeeded by Seth Crowell in the spring of 1808. Service was held in a building, owned by Dorsey Joyce and let, by him, for that purpose. In 1809, a rough building was put up on the corner of Liberty and Canal streets (where the canal crosses Liberty street) without walls or anything more nearly resembling pews than boards resting upon blocks of wood. The structure was, several years later, finished and made into a creditable church. This church was used till 1835, when the property upon which it stood was taken for the Erie canal. The building was moved over to Union street, upon which it fronted; but again progress, this time represented by the Saratoga Railroad, needed the property upon which the church stood. At this time, the Rev. James B. Houghtaling was the pastor and the membership was one hundred and ninety-five. The lot and old building were sold and a better church-building was erected on Liberty street. It was dedicated in 1836, while the Rev. Truman Seymour was pastor.

The Methodist was the fourth of the old Schenectady churches.

#### BAPTIST CHURCH.

The First Baptist Church, which is fast approaching its centennial, was founded in 1822 and is the fifth church in age in Schenectady. Its membership at the time numbered thirty-six



persons, many of them being former members of the old Clifton Park Church, whose elder, Abijah Peck, was the prime mover in the founding of the First Church of Schenectady.

A few months later, in 1823, the pastor of the Dutch Reformed Church of Princeton, the Rev. N. W. Whiting, was convinced that immersion was the only proper way to baptize, so he gave up his ministerial duties in the Dutch Church and joined the Baptists. He was baptized according to the faith and was ordained as the first pastor. Later in the year, the Shaftsbury Baptist Association, numbering forty-five members, joined the First Church.

The second pastor was the Rev. John Cooper, from 1825 to 1827, then there was a break of three years in which the Church was without a pastor. This congregation had a hard contest with financial adversity, not as individuals nor collectively, but as a church organization. The membership numbered but eighty-one and that they held together and kept the organization alive at this time and later, through an even more distressing period, shows the courageous spirit of the members most strikingly. In 1830 the Rev. Richmond Taggart was pastor and in 1833 he was succeeded by the Rev. Abram D. Gillette. In the three years of his pastorate the Church was greatly strengthened in numbers and financially, one hundred persons being baptized by him. In 1834 the Church was without a pastor and in 1835 the Rev. J. M. Graves officiated.

In 1837, in the pastorate of the Rev. Philander G. Gillette, forty-two persons were baptized and the first church building was erected. Mr. Gillette was succeeded by the Rev. Gowant Sawyer, who officiated in 1839 and '40. His brief pastorate was a successful one, for the membership was increased to three hundred. In 1840 an important event took place by the withdrawal of twenty-eight members who organized the Scotia Baptist Church. From 1842 to '45 ninety-three persons joined the Church under the pastorate of the Rev. Laroy Church. In 1845-'46, the pastor was the Rev. William Arthur. In 1847 began a decade of

adversity and depression which might have ended disastrously had another than the late Rev. Horace G. Day been at the head of the affairs spiritual and temporal.

Horace G. Day; the man of small stature and great courage (which was displayed when he spoke fearlessly and with vehemence against the curse of slavery, on the street corners and in halls, time after time, regardless that his life had been threatened and that he had been forced to flee for his life from the stones thrown by those who disapproved) the man of small stature and great spirit, so broad that it opened his great heart to all variations of Christians, Protestant and Catholic, and to the Hebrews, and won the respect and affection of Protestant, Catholic and Jew, so that in his old age members of the three great religious bodies considered it a privilege to open their purses to keep him from the poverty which he deliberately brought upon himself by giving away all that he possessed to the poor.

Mr. Day was born in Hudson, New York, on September 13, 1819. His family, however, originated in Hartford, Connecticut. After his early school days were over, his first employment was as a drug clerk, but his love of books and of mental cultivation caused him to continue his education in the Hudson Academy from which he was graduated as valedictorian of his class. His first experience as a preacher was in 1846 in the Ballston Baptist Church, during the absence of its elder, Norman Fox. During and immediately after his student days, his eloquence as a public speaker was well known in the Hudson and Mohawk valleys and his preaching at Ballston added to his fame. In 1847 he was called to the First Baptist Church of Schenectady and continued in that capacity for fifty years, his retirement from the pastorate taking place in 1897. Thus, his first was his only pastorate. Mr. Day, in his eighty-sixth year, bore a striking resemblance to the late "Oom" Paul Kruger, a resemblance which he himself, recognized. During his fifty years as pastor of one church, he preached 7,800 sermons, united 652 couples in marriage, baptized 625 persons and officiated at 765 funerals.

Mr. Day, although very feeble physically up, to the time of his death, in October, 1904, as the result of his half century of hard work, was contented and happy. The only blot upon the fair reputation of the First Baptist Church is the fact, that instead of paying Mr. Day a small salary as pastor emeritus, sufficient for his simple needs, he had been supported for several years by public subscriptions. Perhaps the most touching thing in connection with Mr. Day, as showing the depth of the feeling and admiration for him, is the fact, that on every occasion when the press of Schenectady announced that a collection would be taken up for him, among the largest and earliest contributions were those from gamblers and saloon keepers of Schenectady.



*Eighteenth Century Chair in the  
Watkins' Family.*



*Present Location of the Reeves-Luffman Co.*

## Chapter VII.

### Free Masonry.

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#### ST. GEORGE'S LODGE.



IT MAY not be denied that, while there are many Masonic Lodges in the State of New York, which are the peers of St. George's No. 6, F. and A. M., of Schenectady, there are very few which can boast of greater age and not one is more honored by the Fraternity at large, and it would seem from studying its past and present that it inherited from the man who was the chief worker for its organization much of his loyalty and patriotism.

Colonel Christopher Yates, the founder of St. George's Lodge No. 6 F. and A. M., was great grandson of Joseph Yates, of Albany, the first American ancestor of the Yates family. He was a captain in the British-Colonial army under Sir William Johnson and a colonel in Washington's army in the Revolution. He was one of the liberally educated men of his day and was regarded as a patriot of the highest order. He was born in 1737; was married to Janetje Bradt, daughter of Andries Bradt, in 1761 and died in 1785, honored and respected by all with whom he came in contact.

Colonel Yates was a civil engineer and his regiment, called "fatigue men," were the engineers who made the ways and built the bridges and fortifications for the army. It was this man, with his high ideas of citizenship and his splendid patriotism, who was the prime mover in the organization of St. George's Lodge.

Application was made to that hot-headed Tory, Sir John Johnson, the Provincial Grand Master, and the son of old Sir

William Johnson. The dispensation was granted on June 21, 1774. This having expired, another was granted that same year, but in the mean time the charter had arrived from the Grand Lodge of England. This charter was dated September 14, 1774, and it was on that date that St. George's Lodge came into existence. This charter was numbered one and it was the number of the Lodge up to 1800, when the number was changed to seven. In 1819 it was changed to eight and in 1839 it was again changed, this time to six, the present numeral.

The seven original members were: Christopher Yates, master; Benjamin Hilton, Jr., senior warden; John Hughan, junior warden; Cornelius Van Dyke, Aaron Van Patten, Robert Clench, and Robert Alexander. The first candidate for initiation was Tettnis Swart.

In the following two years the membership must have increased rapidly, for the minutes show that there were in 1776 thirty-eight members of the Lodge in the Continental army fighting for the Independence of the Colonies. A notable fact in connection with St. George's is, that, while nearly all of the rural Lodges of the Colony failed to meet while the war was in progress, there was no interruption in the meetings of St. George's. On the contrary, there was great activity in it, for many of the Continental soldiers in and about Schenectady were Masons and attended the meetings, and many of the officers of the Patriots' army who made honorable records for themselves, were made Masons in St. George's Lodge.

That the principles of the order were rigidly observed—notwithstanding the fact that the war made money scarce and the times hard—is shown by two entries in the minutes of money given to the families of Walter Vrooman and Andrew Rynex, who had been captured and imprisoned by the British.

The meeting places of the lodge were for many years in the homes of brother Masons. The first was Clenche's Tavern, where the brothers met till December 20, 1777, when they met in

the home of Aaron Truax and they continued to meet there till 1784, when the place was changed to "the home of the widow Clenche" and then in the home of John A. Bradt.

In 1790 the membership had increased so greatly and the war being over, the financial condition was easier, so it was decided that the time had arrived when the Lodge could own its own home. With this end in view, the house belonging to Dr. Van de Volgen was purchased. This house stood on the south side of State street where the tracks of the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad are now, next to the corner opposite the Edison Hotel. The upper story of this house was fitted up for lodge rooms and the first floor was assigned to the tiler, Andrew Rynex, as his residence. And still the lodge increased in membership, for in 1797 it became necessary to enlarge the building, and the Mark Lodge, which was instituted that year, met in it. In 1799 there were 120 members in good standing. This Van der Volgen property was owned and occupied by the Lodge till 1835 when the property was taken by the Schenectady and Utica Railroad on a long-term lease. This lease, which was inherited by the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad, expired in recent years, but the Lodge was unable to secure remuneration from that company.

St. George's next home was the Lyceum Building, on Yates street, which they purchased shares in to the value of \$650 and the right to educate four children of Masons in the Lyceum annually, free of tuition. The Lodge held its meeting on one floor of the building and the school sessions were held on the other. This building is now standing. It is the hexagonal structure which is occupied by one of the Greek Letter Fraternities of Union College.

The meetings were held in the Lyceum Building for twenty-one years. On January 23, 1856, they sold their shares in the Lyceum and rented the second floor of the Van Horne Building on State street, now known as Van Horne Hall. This building was built by the man for whom it was named. He was a mayor of the city and a master of the Lodge. Again a desire for a home of

its own was felt and, as the means for indulging that desire were available, the Lodge purchased the lot and erected the handsome temple on Church street where it has met ever since. This building, which is used for no other than Masonic purposes, is one of the finest and most dignified in its external and interior appearance of any lodge, in a city the size of Schenectady, in the State. A large sum was spent upon the decorations and furnishings in 1896.

It is a significant fact, in connection with St. George's—significant in that it shows the prominence of the members of the Lodge throughout its long life of 130 years—that every mayor but one of Schenectady was a member of the Lodge and that nine of them had been its masters. They were: Mayor Joseph C. Yates, who was master, 1791 to '96; Mayor Henry Yates, Jr., who was master in 1803; Mayor Isaac M. Schermerhorn, who was master from 1828 to '43; Mayor James E. Van Horne, who was master in 1853; Mayor Abraham A. Van Vorst, who was master in 1855-'56; Mayor William J. Van Horne, who was master in 1871; Mayor T. Low Barhydt, who was master in 1884-'85; Mayor John H. White, who was master in 1886-'87; Mayor William Howes Smith, who was master in 1896-'97; and Mayor Horace S. Van Voast, who was master in 1901.

Joseph C. Yates was Senator from 1806 to 1808 when he resigned to accept a seat on the bench of the Supreme Court of the State. In 1822 he was Governor of New York.

Henry Yates, Jr., was Senator from 1810 to 1814 and from 1818 to 1822. He was a member of the Council of Appointment from 1812 to 1818. He was also a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1822, when the second constitution of the State was adopted.



## Chapter VIII. An Historical Bridge.

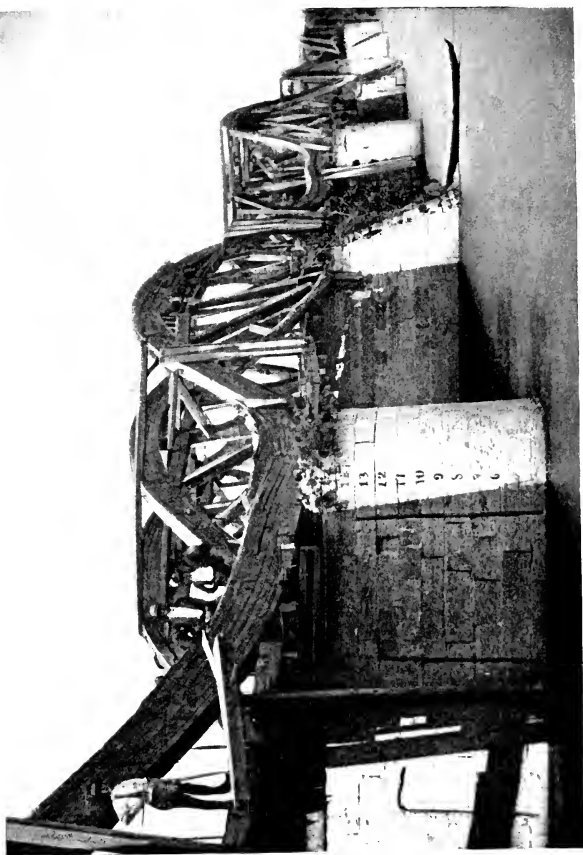
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### THE OLD BRIDGE.



WHEN new communities, which had not yet finished the struggle to conquer Nature, began to build bridges, to connect themselves with other struggling communities, a degree of progress was shown, which was far ahead of that shown by the same communities, generations later, when they began to connect themselves with more distant parts, by means of railroads. For bridge-building is at the top of the mechanic arts and the skill and accuracy of the designing engineer must be greater than in any other kind of construction.

So, in 1808, when the tiny city of Schenectady and the tinier hamlet of Scotia, together with the people of the Township of Glenville, decided to cross the eight hundred feet of the Mohawk river with a bridge, they exhibited a degree of progress which was most commendable. For years, the means of communication between the north and south banks of the Mohawk had been the canoes of the Indians. Later, after the White Man began to make the soil produce articles of trade, too cumbersome for the light and graceful birchbark or the more clumsy dug-out, his necessity produced the flat-boat and the batteau—the latter, being adopted from the French of Canada. A little later still, when the cable-ferry began to cross the Mohawk, from the foot of Ferry street to the opposite bank, on the Glenville side, there seemed to be nothing further needed. If a farmer with a load of produce, or an Indian trader, with a load of pelts wished to cross from the north to the south bank, on his way to Schenectady, and Albany, all that he had to do was to drive or walk upon the flat-boat and



*Showing Construction of Glenville Bridge.*

pull himself and his wagon and horses across, by means of the cable, which was attached to both banks and ran over a pulley on the flat-boat.

Toward the end of seventeen hundred, the necessity for better and quicker communication, which would not be affected by a flooded condition of the river, began to be felt; and so, a bridge was discussed.

The Mohawk Turnpike and Bridge Company was incorporated on April 4, 1800, by the following men: Benjamin Walker, Peter Smith, Gaylord Griswold, William Alexander, Charles Nukirk, John Beardsley, Jacob C. Cuyler, Abraham Outhout, James Murdock, Alexander Alexander and John C. Cuyler.

The articles of incorporation stated the purpose to be: "the erection of a bridge across the Mohawk, opposite the compact part of the City of Schenectady and for making a good road to pass near the house of William Kline, in Amsterdam; thence, to Palatine bridge; thence, through the village at the little-falls to the Court House of the County of Herkimer; thence, to the village of Utica."

The legislators of 1800 were, evidently, not experts in the gentle art of "graft," "rake-offs" and "commissions," nor is it probable that they found, in their overcoat-pockets, blank envelopes, containing one or more bills of large denomination; for a provision was incorporated, that the company might not acquire more than \$10,000 worth of property; nor could it purchase property for any other purpose—thus eliminating the possibility of speculation.

The first attempt was a bold one and it would be considered such, to-day; for it was to build a suspension-bridge of wood, with only two spans across the 800 feet of water. With this idea, the work was begun by the construction of two massive abutments and an equally massive pier. This pier is in the middle of the river, and is the largest of those on which the present bridge rests. The work was begun in the autumn by The Mohawk Bridge Company in 1808 and by the time the ice was

strong on the river, the work of setting the wooden cables in place was started, and the scaffolding, to support the immense strings of tightly-bolted-together planks and timbers, was built upon the ice. The work was progressing well and the usual crowd, which was attracted by the building-operations, collected whenever work permitted, to watch the greatest undertaking yet attempted in this part of the young State. In those days, the Mohawk was much more to be depended upon than it can be now. The ice formed and broke up and the floods came and went, at times which were more nearly fixed. This was, probably, due to the fact that Nature had not been deranged by the destruction of the forests. They had the effect of holding back the rains and melting the snows, and of allowing them to gradually run away to the sea, by the way of the Mohawk and Hudson. But the winter of 1809 was an exception. The river rose rapidly, in the January thaw, and the ice went out, taking the work of months and the hope and money of the workers with it.

When the people had recovered from their disappointment, they began, again, to plan; and, this time, they concluded to increase the number of spans to four, by building two other piers between the one in the middle and the abutments. These piers are the two other large ones to be seen to-day, which, with their older fellow, are solid as they were then.

This four-span wooden suspension-bridge was massive. It was made of plank, 4 by 12 inches and from 12 to 14 feet long, bolted together, forming an immense, flexible cable of wood, 12 inches thick, 3 feet wide and the full length of the river, with the addition of the extra length required for the loops, making the total length of the cables probably 1,100 feet. These cables were braced by many timbers from the abutments and piers, were supported by great upright beams and, of course, the whole thing was anchored at the ends. This was practically the bridge; for the driveway had nothing to do with the cables, any more than to be suspended from them. That is to say, flood and ice might carry away the driveway and not harm the super-structure.

This plan showed the skill of the man who designed and built the bridge. It was accomplished by hanging the driveway from the wooden cables by square, wrought-iron rods, which passed up through the cables and down through the floor-timbers. Instead of fastening these rods, rigidly, holes were made through the ends, and pieces of iron, called keys, were passed through these holes, resting on immense washers. The floor timbers were supported in the same manner—only, in this instance, the keys were below the timbers.

The result proved to be even more than was hoped for; for the flexible driveway was, often, pounded and battered by floating ice and debris; and the very flexibility of it saved it from destruction. On the rare occasions when portions were destroyed or damaged, the work of repair was easy; for all that was necessary was to remove the keys whercupon the damaged part could be slipped out and new parts put in place.

Probably, the greatest strain put on the bridge was one spring, many years ago, when the high water brought down a large canal-boat. Its nose struck the suspended floor a terrific blow. It hung, for a few minutes, and then, when the force of the water became irresistable, the boat turned end-over-end, and went rushing down to destruction, on the rocks along the Niskayuna shore.

For many years, the only covering on the bridge was where the great loops of the cables passed over the upright timbers on the abutments and on the piers. The drop of the cables was shingled, to protect the cables from the weather.

As time went on, the joints of the bridge—unlike those of an old man, which shrink and become stiff—began to stretch and draw out. This caused the bridge to sink between the piers; and, when the sinking had reached a point, too low for safety, other piers were built under it. Instead of building them just high enough to meet the sunken portion, they were several feet higher, thus raising that portion and giving, in time, that odd up-and-down, wave-like appearance to the driveway, shown in the picture.



*Bridge Connecting Schenectady and Scotia, 1809 to 1873.*

Finally, the company decided to cover the entire structure; and, as the covering between the piers was no higher than was absolutely necessary, that patched-up appearance of several barns of different sizes joined together, was given. This system of covering was to save material and work; for, had the entire bridge been covered to the same height, the expense would have been greatly increased.

In 1814, an attempt was made by interested parties to obtain the passage of a bill, through the Legislature, which would have the effect of increasing tolls; but this bill was bitterly opposed by the people and was finally defeated. Another bill was passed, or the original one was so amended, that the rights, asked for, in regard to straightening the turnpike and altering its direction somewhat, were included, with the toll-increasing portion eliminated.

By the time 1815 arrived, the young country was taking on some airs, on account of the success in the "War of 1812," and on account of its prosperity. The individuals and families, who had made fortunes out of the Revolution and were making them

out of the war then being fought; and those who had accumulated money, in more legitimate ways, were beginning to feel the effects of wealth. So, in this year, a bill became a law, which was entitled: "An Act to increase the Rates of Toll for crossing the Mohawk Bridge, at the city of Schenectady, and for other purposes."

The increase of tolls, in this bill, was aimed at these persons who were beginning to feel their wealth; and a play was made to the "common people," by making exceptions in their favor. The bridge corporation played to the gallery, to obtain its end, without the opposition of the people, just as corporations do, in these days.

While the toll for wagons and sleds, carrying wood to the First and Second Wards, (which was really the city proper, the Third and Fourth Wards being the towns of Rotterdam and Glenville), and for farm-wagons, going to and from work, was but 6 1-4 cents; and while nothing was charged for crossing the bridge to attend church, the toll for a two-wheeled pleasure-wagon, drawn by two horses, jacks or mules, was 18 3-4 cents, with 6 cents for each additional animal; and, for "a four-wheel pleasure-carriage, the body of which is suspended on springs," drawn by one animal, it was 25 cents, with 12 1-2 cents for each additional animal. In this way, the rich were made to pay and the humble were quieted, by playing to their pockets. It was clearly shown, by this act, that the keeping of a spring pleasure-carriage was considered evidence of affluence.

This same act made it unlawful for the company to pay more than eight per cent. to the stock-holders, upon its capitalization.

As time went on, attempts were made, by the people, to do away with the toll-bridge and to make it free. With this end in view, the old bridge was regularly indicted by the grand jury, on a charge of being unsafe. Expert engineers were brought here to examine the bridge and to pass upon its safety. But a strange thing had happened in the building of additional piers, under the

portions which had sagged below the level of the driveway. These piers had changed the structure from a suspension-bridge to a form of bridge of which the engineers had no knowledge. There was absolutely no manner in which the expert engineers could determine where the strain of the bridge was. Some of the great upright timbers which support the loops of the cables, on the three original piers, had rotted off at their lower ends; and still the structure was as strong as when it rested upon these timbers. In addition, the experts had testified as to the length of life of a wooden-bridge and this old bridge had lived more than twice as long and was, still, sound.

In January, the late C. P. Sanders, who was the leader of the free-bridge party, succeeded in purchasing, quietly, in small blocks, 633 shares of the stock—thus gaining control of the company. At a meeting of share-holders, Mr. Sanders succeeded in getting the late Dr. Barent H. Mynderse, the late Judge Walter T. L. Sanders and himself, elected directors—the other two, being Platt Potter and William Van Vranken, who built the old mansion which stood on the south-east corner of State and Clinton streets, on the site of the Schenectady Savings Bank. Potter and Van Vranken were bitterly opposed to the selling of the bridge to make it free, Van Vranken, because his salary, as treasurer, was a good one and he disliked losing it.

Mr. Sanders generally accomplished what he wished. In 1873, he had a bill presented to the Legislature, permitting the City of Schenectady, and the Towns of Glenville, Niskayuna, Clifton Park, Charlton, and Ballston to pay \$12,000 for the old bridge; \$6,000 for Freemans bridge and \$6,000 for the Aqueduct bridge, each town paying \$4,000 of the total \$24,000. New bridges were to be built and the bridges were to be free. Glenville was to keep the new bridge, from Scotia to the city, in repair.

Before the bill was presented, Governor Dix was seen, in regard to it. Governor Dix said that, in his college days, at Union, he was familiar with the old wooden-bridge to Scotia



and that the proposition to make it free, was a step in the right direction. In those days, the City and Towns of the County were at hot war—the City taking any possible steps to defeat the Towns. It may be said, parenthetically, that some of the scenes which took place, at meetings of the Board of Supervisors, would have ended in the police-court, in these days.

The opposition was led by Mayor A. W. Hunter and several other prominent men of the city. They sent emissaries to the outlying districts of the Towns, to stir up the people to join in the opposition. The bill was presented and the opposition gave notice that it would be opposed, when the hearing, in committee, was given. Mr. Sanders and the other friends of free-bridges, found that there would be a delay: so another bill was drawn and substituted, and when Mayor Hunter and the other members of the opposition appeared before the committee, at the hearing, they were told that they had no standing, as another bill had been presented, asking for permission for Glenville alone to buy the old wooden bridge. This bill became a law.

On the day the bill was to go to the Governor, for his signature, a clever bit of diplomacy was used, to help the cause of the free-bridge advocates. Both the friends and opposers of the bill went to Albany, to appear before the Governor. On arriving there, it was found that the Governor was out of town. This was fatal to the supporters of a free-bridge; so Mr. Sanders and some of the others went up Maiden Lane, a short cut, from the station to the Capitol, and made known their difficulty. Friends there arranged matters, by having a man, who resembled Governor Dix, in form, to sit in his chair. It so happened that not one of the opposition knew the Governor, by sight; so, when they were ushered into his room, they stated their case and the man, sitting in the Governor's chair, assured the opposition that he would not sign the bill; and so they went home, rejoicing. When Governor Dix returned to Albany, he signed the bill and the opposition went to see him, in anything but a happy frame of

mind; but when they were presented, they found that the man who had made the promise and the man who signed the bill were very different individuals.

The success of Mr. Sanders and his free-bridge party and the clever manner in which the town had been forced into advocating the greatest good, for the greatest number, that is, free bridges, somewhat roiled the voters. They vowed that they would get even, when election-time came; but again, they had to deal with a man whose political acumen fitted him for state, rather than county leadership.

On election day, all the stores and the two or three broom-shops in Scotia, were shut down and the men sent to the Town House, to "whoop-it-up" for free-bridges. They arrived upon the scene, with a shout, and everytime that they saw anybody, especially a new comer, they shouted for free-bridges and they drank to the success of free-bridges. Every time that the opponents attempted any enthusiasm, they were silenced by the shouts of the others. Finally, the leaders of the opposition got together and decided that, as everybody seemed to be for free-bridges, they did not care to be snowed under, and to be laughed at; so the majority of them voted the free-bridge ticket, which put Mr. Sanders in the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Van Vranken and Mr. Potter still opposed the sale of the old wooden bridge; so Mr. Sanders asked them to say what they would do about it. Mr. Van Vranken said that he would agree to sell for so much a share, the total, amounting to \$12,600, he, thinking that the extra \$600 would kill the whole business. Mr. Sanders, as supervisor, paid the \$12,000 and the \$600 was raised by private subscription in Scotia.

When the time came to pay for the old bridge, another very clever move was made, which saved the inhabitant-taxpayers of Glenville from paying a cent of the additional assessment for raising the \$12,000 and made the non-resident taxpayers bear the burden of the assessment for the purchase of the bridge. This was accomplished by the vote, authorizing the using of the

accumulated funds, obtained from the old quit-rents and from the commutation of the quit-rents, to pay, for the inhabitant-tax-payers, the extra assessment for the purchase of the bridge. In order to make this clear, it will be necessary to go back into the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

In the earliest days, when the land belonged to the Crown, inducements were offered to Court favorites to go to the Colony, for settlement, so that the domain would be greatly increased in value, and, thus, make a resultant increase in royal revenues. Immense tracts of land were granted to these men, by Royal Patent, the consideration (or price) being that they should cause to be settled and worked, a certain portion of the grants.

To accomplish this, the Proprietors, or the Patroons, offered inducements to immigrants to settle upon their lands. These settlers were given farms, varying in size, for which no lump-sum in cash was paid, but a nominal rent, called "quit rents," which were to be paid forever. For a century or more, these rents were paid in produce of the land. Sometimes, it was a small quantity of wheat and the like; in one curious contract, the rent was sevenths of a board; a board being twelve feet long, six inches wide and one inch thick. After the people began to be more prosperous and money was not an unusual possession, small sums of money were paid. Sometimes it was a lump-sum yearly; but generally it was so much an acre, ten or fifteen cents being the usual rental. While this was so small, in the individual case, the total was considerable; for the grants to the Proprietors included tens of thousands of acres.

Up to 1820, Glenville was the fourth ward of Schenectady and Rotterdam was the third. In this year, they were set off into towns. In order to equalize matters, Glenville, (for that is the only town we are concerned with), was divided into "Great Lots"—the town taking one and the city the next, and where the valuations did not equalize, city lots were given to the town.

When anyone wished to obtain a farm, from lands belonging to the town, these purchasers paid no money, other than the



City End of Glenville Bridge.

annual quit-rent. Should a man wish to rid himself of the rent, he would pay to the town a sum of money, which would represent the principal of which the rent would be the interest. For instance; if the rent was \$7 a year, the tenant would pay \$100, that being the principal, the interest of which would be \$7. The town loaned this money and put it out to interest, in various ways; so that, in time, it became a considerable sum.

When the agreement was made to sell the old bridge, a resolution was adopted, by the trustees of the town, to apply this accumulated fund on the inhabitant taxes. In this way, the inhabitant taxpayers of Glenville paid only the usual county tax—the excess of assessment for the purchase of the bridge being paid by the trustees from the quit-rents' fund. But the non-resident taxpayers and the railroads had to pay the full assessment. As a matter of fact, they paid for the bridge.

The old bridge was sold for \$500 and many of its timbers went to build some of the barns and stables which are standing in Scotia and the surrounding country, to-day.

When the time came to tear down the old bridge, it was thought that it would be an easy job; but it was so strongly built, that the work was really, very difficult. The long square rods, which supported the floor of the driveway and the hundreds of bolts, which held the planks and timbers together, had become so twisted by the strain, when the high water was on and by the blows of debris, which smashed against it, in the flood, that it was impossible to pull them out. The only thing which could be done was to saw the bridge apart; and this was accomplished. A man by the name of Aaron Burr was the architect of the old wooden-bridge, and if his namesake of Revolutionary days, had builded as well, his name would now be among those of the honored ones.

The contract for the present bridge was given to The Remington Agricultural Co., for \$29,993.07. Other expenditures were: Price paid for the old bridge, less the price it was sold for, was \$11,500; filling approaches, \$400; toll house, \$169.75;

stoning abutments and piers, \$558.75; raising and repairing abutments and piers, \$15,076.23; rip-rap, piles, etc., \$3,094.81; stone for approaches, \$147.78; filling abutments, \$189.75; extras, \$634; to the engineer, \$1,125, making a total of \$60,355.34. These figures are not generally known; for the book in which they were kept *was mysteriously lost*, by the town official, whose business it was to guard it, on his way home from town-meeting.



*Interior of the Bridge.*

## Chapter IX. Early Transportation.

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### RIVER NAVIGATION.

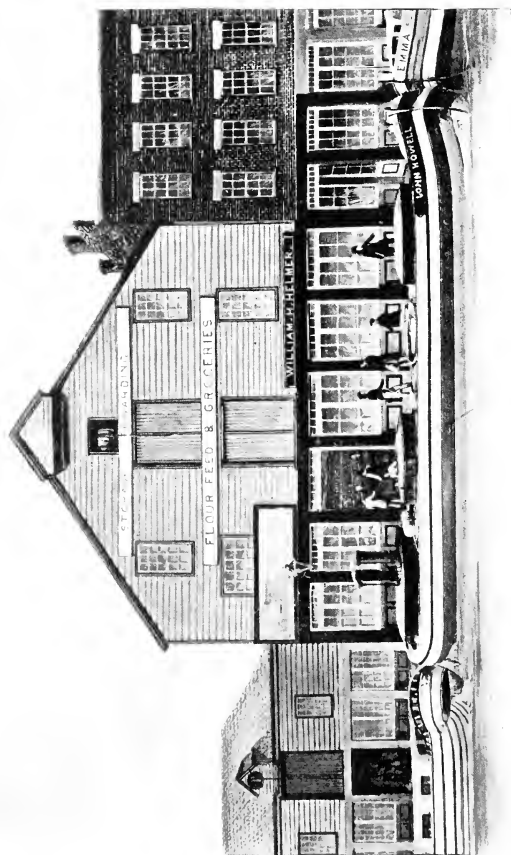


THE earliest means of communication between settlements for travel and especially for carrying the pelts from the wilderness and the inland and Great Lakes, was the birch-bark canoe of the Indians. These were succeeded by batteaux, durham boats and finally by canal boats and the railroad for which Mr. Featherstonhaugh had worked so many years.

In the early days the navigation of the Mohawk was difficult for there were many "rifts" or submerged piles of river stones and pebbles which had been forced up to near the surface by the idiosyncrasies of the current or by freaks in the current due to unusually high water in the spring or ice jams. Although some of these "rifts" have changed, or entirely disappeared during generations, they were practically permanent during a lifetime so they were all well known and each had its distinctive name.

Schenectady being the easternmost end of river navigation, the "rifts" were all west of Schenectady. The first of these, a few miles west of the city, was called, "Six flats rift," then came "Fort Hunter rift," Caughnawaga, Keator, (the worst on the river, there being a fall of ten feet.) Brandywine, at Canajoharie, very rapid but short; Eheler, near Fort Plain, and finally, Little Falls, so called in distinction from the great falls at the mouth of the river near the City of Cohoes.

The first freight and passenger vessel, as has been said, was the birch-bark canoe and this was the only means of carrying freight upon the river up to 1740. About that year, several of



1865. Dock Street.



the great Indian traders, among them being Sir William Johnson (as he later became), John Duncan, Daniel Campbell, James Ellice, Charles Martin, having seen the superior qualities of the batteaux of the Canadians, introduced them, and began to use them on the Mohawk. The batteau was longer than the canoe, broader amidship, sharp at bow and stern and much more strongly built than the canoe. This latter quality made it possible to drag them over shallow places, an operation which the canoe could not stand without serious injury.

These boats were forced up the lesser rapids by means of poles, work at which the rivermen were most skillful. At the stronger rapids they would be towed by ropes leading from the boats to a number of the "crew" on shore. Where there were falls, as at Little Falls, the loads were carried around and then the batteau was treated in the same manner. Or, when it was desired to go from one navigable stream to another, as at Fort Stanwix from the Mohawk, to Wood creek, the same laborious carrying was necessary. From Wood creek they continued to Oneida lake, the Oswego river to Oswego, on Lake Ontario, whence they could go to other settlements or trading posts on that lake or down the St. Lawrence river. If they wished to go into the far west to Detroit or Mackinaw, it was necessary to carry around Niagara falls to Chippewa. These batteaux were in use till about 1790.

In this century of from forty to eighty miles an hour in express trains, electric trolley cars and steamboats, such a journey does not appeal to the people of to-day. The imagination cannot picture the toil and hardship, the wet, cold and hunger, the danger from natural causes, from wild beasts and wilder men. Perhaps nothing will so strongly emphasize the hardihood of these traders and boatmen as the statement in a letter from the wardens of St. George's Church in Schenectady to the secretary of the Society for the Promotion of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, in London, that it was difficult to pledge a fixed salary for the rector because so many of the congregation were Indian traders to the Great

Lakes and did not always return within a year. Besides the hardships and dangers, these men were deprived for months, and even a year, of the society of their families and even the primitive comforts of their homes.

About 1790, General Philip Schuyler, who was then Surveyor General of the State, organized a company known as The Inland Lock Navigation Co. Among the stockholders were many Schenectadians. This company constructed locks and a short



*An Early View of Dock Street.*

canal at Little Falls and a canal connecting the Mohawk with Wood creek thus doing away with the two carries. The locks and short canals were completed in 1795. In that year began Schenectady's greatest prosperity; a prosperity, all things considered, which was greater than that of 1904 with the fifteen

thousand employes of the General Electric and American Locomotive Companies and their combined pay rolls of \$700,000 a month.

In 1795 and '96 Jacob S. Glen, Eri Lusher, Jonathan Walton, S. N. Bayard and other of the great shippers, added to the already considerable wharfage on the Binni Kill and built additional storehouses of great capacity.

Then began the era of the durham boat, a name which Major MacMurray, Pearson's editor, thinks was derived from the same source as the dorey, which is still the popular small boat of the fisherman of Long Island Sound and the New England coast. The durham boat, if not a thing of beauty, was one of great utility. They were in shape something like the modern canal boat but had finer lines fore and aft, the bow and stern being of a rounding taper instead of blunt. They had short decks fore and aft and narrow decking along the sides, upon which the boatmen stood or walked back and forth while poling up rapids. They were provided with masts near the center of the boats which were rigged with square, or ship sails, and were only of use when the wind was aft or quartering, beating up the wind being impossible. These boats were from ten to twenty tons burthen and had crews of five or six men. The greater size and weight of the durham boats made the labor of forcing them up the lesser "rifts" much greater. There being strength in union, it was the custom for several boats to leave port in company so that the combined crews of all could the more easily pull and push each individual boat up with less labor. The life was tough and the men were tougher and, like their saltwater brother, when in port they generally succeeded in having a time which has been aptly described by one who knew, as "A monkey and parrot time."

Eri Lusher, being somewhat possessed of a spirit of progress, in 1815 established a daily line of durham packets between Schenectady and Utica for carrying only passengers. Instead of being open for the greater portion of their length, as was the case in the freight boats, they were provided with a trunk cabin

handsomely furnished. Their capacity was twenty-five passengers and their schedule was thirteen hours from Utica to Schenectady; from Schenectady to Utica two days, if the wind was up stream and the water was high, otherwise "the schedule was busted."

The carrying of skins and travelers toward the east was by means of packhorses first of all and then heavy, rough carts were used between Schenectady and Albany. From Albany to the then, as now, great shipping port of New York, the pelts were carried on sloops and the merchandize and necessities for the settlers were brought back by them. The trip each way, under ordinary condition, required seven days. This was the means of communication between Schenectady and the west, with New York, before the Revolution. It is a notable fact that the first mail to arrive in Schenectady was on April 3, 1763. This was a letter from Sir William Johnson to Samuel Fuller.

While the Revolution had impoverished the country and reduced the population, it was the means of arousing the people to an appreciation of the necessity for going ahead, especially in the matter of greater facilities for communication between out-lying settlements and New York.

Isaac Wyck, Talmage Hall, and John Kinney were granted exclusive right by the Legislature in 1785, to maintain a stage line between Albany and New York. Their charter required that they should have at least two covered wagons drawn by four horses and that they should make the trip each way, at least once a week. Should they fail to do so, they forfeited their charter. The first trip was made in June of that year. The start was made from the New York terminus at Hull's tavern and from Albany at the King's Arms (later the City Tavern) both stages meeting halfway, at Poughkeepsie. The fare was eight cents a mile. In 1804 the trips were made in three days, the stops over night being at Peekskill and Rhinebeck, and the fare was reduced to \$8. Previous to 1818 the stages had been springless, but in that year the great leathern straps were used on which to sling the body of the coach. This improved traveling and made

the coaches comfortable. It was not long before the carrying business had increased so greatly that one hundred stages left Albany over the several routes daily. This, of course, made Albany a very busy place.

In 1793, Schenectady had its first regular stage line. Moses Beal, the proprietor of a first-class tavern, (a brick building which was on the site of the old Givens house, now the site of the Edison hotel), started a stage line to Albany, Johnstown and Canajoharie, the stage making the journey once a week. The fare was three cents a mile. This line was a great convenience for travelers and increased trade between Schenectady and other places and was profitable for Beal.

The profitableness of stages appealed so strongly to John Hudson, who kept the Schenectady Coffee House, on the southwest corner of Union and Ferry streets,—where Shankle's grocery store stands—that he established a line of stages between Schenectady and Albany and made the journey three times a week. John Rogers, of Ballston, established a line to connect with Hudson's, thus giving through communication with Saratoga Springs. In 1794 there were five great post routes terminating at Albany. They were: to New York City; Burlington, Vermont; Brookfield, Massachusetts; Springfield, Massachusetts; and to Schenectady, Johnstown, Canajoharie, German Flats, Whitestown, Old Fort Schuyler, Onondaga, Aurora, Scipio, Geneva, Canandaigua, and eventually to Buffalo. Each of the four eastern lines carried a weekly mail; on the western, once in two weeks. The business on the western line had increased so greatly by 1812 that to see ten or twelve stages on the Dike between Schenectady and Scotia at one time was not unusual.

On August 17, 1807, the first Hudson river steamboat, *The Cleremont*, was established. The time for leaving New York was at 6 o'clock every Saturday afternoon. The time required in reaching West Point was ten hours; Newburgh, thirteen hours; Poughkeepsie, seventeen hours; Catskill, twenty-five hours; Hudson, twenty-nine hours; and Albany thirty-four hours. The



*The Quaint, Little De W in Clinton Train of 1831.*

return was made from Albany every Wednesday morning at 8 o'clock. The fares were: from New York to West Point, \$2.50; to Newburgh, \$3.00; to Poughkeepsie, \$3.50; to Hudson, \$5.00; and to Albany, \$7.00. Passengers wishing to stop at other than the regular places paid at the rate of \$1 for each twenty miles. Meals on board the boat were fifty cents each. Now, in 1904, the charges are reversed: the fare being greatly reduced and the cost of meals greatly increased.

### MOHAWK & HUDSON R. R.

The first steps toward the present vast railroad systems of the North American Continent were taken in Schenectady by a resident of Duanesburg, Schenectady County, a man whose reputation as a diplomat, scientist, explorer and author, extended over both hemispheres.

George W. Featherstonhaugh, an English gentleman—the son-in-law of Judge James Duane, the patriot, statesman, and friend of Washington—was residing on his thousand-acre estate in Duanesburg in 1812. His acquaintance with George Stephenson caused him to investigate the possibilities of the steam locomotive as a means of opening new territory and increasing the commerce and wealth of the country.

In 1812 Mr. Featherstonhaugh began a series of articles which were published in the periodicals of that day. They excited the ridicule of the masses. His intellectual equals considered him a visionary and very few gave his ideas serious consideration. To a man of his calibre, ridicule did not discourage nor did faith elate. He foresaw the possibilities of the steam railroad and continued to write on the subject and to investigate. For thirteen years he was the only believer in the locomotive.

At last, finding that he must move in the matter alone, he, on December 28, 1825, published the following notice of application in the Schenectady Cabinet, a newspaper:

"Application will be made to the Legislature at the opening session, for the passage of an act to incorporate the Mohawk &

Hudson Railroad Company, with an exclusive grant for a term of years for the construction of a railroad betwixt the Mohawk and Hudson rivers, with a capital of \$300,000 to be increased to \$500,000, if necessary, and to receive such certain tolls on the same as may seem fit for the Legislature to grant."

It is an interesting fact that the proprietor of *The Cabinet* told Mr. Featherstonhaugh that if the charter were granted he could pay for the advertisement, otherwise there would be no charge. The charter was granted on March 26, 1826, after Mr. Featherstonhaugh had appeared before the Legislature to argue the matter and explain his ideas and the reason for his faith in railroads. He believed that if the two great water-ways of the State, over which thousands of tons of freight were transported yearly to and from the great markets of the east and the fertile territory of the interior of New York, were connected by a railroad, that the practicability of railroads could be better demonstrated than anywhere else. There were but two incorporators: Stephen Van Rensselaer, the last Patroon, who was the



*Terminus of Mohawk & Hudson Railway, Crane Street, Mt. Pleasant.*



president, and George W. Featherstonhaugh, the vice-president. Peter Fleming was the construction engineer. Mr. Fleming's estimate for the construction of twenty miles of railroad was \$320,000. Mr. Featherstonhaugh went to England to consult with George Stephenson the year the charter was granted and remained in Europe traveling with his wife. It was not till 1828 that he returned to America. Mr. Fleming wrote to him soon after his return in regard to money matters in connection with the road. Later in the year the mansion in Duanesburg was destroyed by fire. This loss of the home together with previous deaths in his family so depressed Mr. Featherstonhaugh that he gave up all his large interests to his agents and went to New York city to reside.

While it is true that the railroad between Baltimore and Washington was older as a road in actual operation than the Mohawk & Hudson, the subject of railroads for practical purposes originated in Schenectady with Mr. Featherstonhaugh.

It seems strange that this railroad history should be so generally unknown and that the management of the child of the Mohawk & Hudson Railroad, the New York Central & Hudson River Railroad, should be ignorant of it seems stranger still. That it was unaware of these facts is surmised from the contents of a folder advertising its St. Louis Fair exhibit. The following is quoted from a paragraph in the folder:

"As long ago as 1811 Chancellor Livingston, who was associated with Robert Fulton in the invention of the steamboat, received a letter from some 'wild, hair-brained individual' asking his opinion of the practicability of railroads. After giving the matter due consideration, the worthy chancellor replied, that besides being too dangerous, it would be impossible to build rails that would sustain so heavy a weight as you propose moving at the rate of four miles an hour on wheels."

This only shows in a striking manner how tiny a thing is world-wide fame in the commercial mind.

It so happens that the "wild hair-brained individual" was

George W. Featherstonhaugh, the gentleman who was honored by the countries of Europe and the United States for his work in science, literature, exploration, and his ability as a diplomat; the personal friend of Henry Clay, who was a frequent visitor in the Featherstonhaugh mansion in Duaneburg; James Madison, John Quincy Adams, Andrew Jackson, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, Lafayette and Joseph and Jerome Bonaparte, to say nothing of the friends in the government of Great Britain. Besides, it also so happens that the "worthy chancellor" (fancy the use of worthy in connection with a Livingston of that day) was a relative of the beautiful Sarah Duane, the wife of Mr. Featherstonhaugh.

This is indeed the century and nation in which a dollar casts a shadow over fame not based upon the gold standard.

It was in August, 1831, that the locomotive, DeWitt Clinton, and a train of coaches made the first trip from Albany to Schenectady. Of the fourteen passengers who made that first



*First Train on Mohawk & Hudson Railway.*

trip, one of them, Mr. John Matthias, lived to celebrate his hundredth birthday anniversary in Schenectady in November, 1903. He remembered the trip and its incidents distinctly.

When the public contemplates the surroundings of a multi-millionaire and tries to guess at the unlimited things he can do and the value of the treasures he can own, to think of him as having been a son of a poor father takes considerable imagination. When the multi-millionaire is the greatest railroad system in the world,

even greater imagination is required to think of it as ever having been weak and poor, yet such was the condition of the parent of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad. That this railroad, with its ten thousand miles of tracks; its influence in the affairs of the wealthiest State of the Union; with its stock quoted up to a point almost beyond the dreams of avarice, could be the off-spring of a parent which was in such a condition in 1839 that its stockholders requested a statement by the management of its possessions, its earnings, and its ability to meet its obligations, yet such was the fact.

The Mohawk & Hudson Railway Company began its active existence in 1831, by connecting the cities of Albany and Schenectady, 16 miles apart. On December 14, 1839, a letter was addressed to the executive committee of the road consisting of John B. Lasala, David Wood, Archibald Craig, Thomas Palmer and W. L. F. Warren, requesting, first, a statement as to the number of passengers and quantity of freight transported, with the receipts since the first year of the road—second, disbursements each year in detail—third, cash on hand

**MOHAWK & HUDSON RAILROAD.**  
The following arrangements will be observed on the Railroad, until further notice:

Carriages will leave the head of the inclined plane  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile from the city of Schenectady, at the following times:

$\frac{1}{2}$  past 4 in the morning.  
8 o'clock A. M.  
12 do noon.  
2 do P. M.  
4 do P. M.

Leave Albany at the head of Lydius street 2 miles from the Hudson River, at the following times.

$\frac{1}{2}$  past 6 o'clock, A. M.  
10 do A. M.  
 $\frac{1}{4}$  past 4 do P. M.

The Locomotive Engine DE WITT CLINTON, will depart in the following order:

Leave head of plane at Schenectady at 8 o'clock, A. M. and 2 P. M. Head of Lydius street, Albany, at 10 o'clock, A. M. and  $\frac{1}{4}$  past 4, P. M.

Passengers taking the Carriages at Schenectady at  $\frac{1}{2}$  half past 4 in the morning, will arrive at Albany in season for the 7 o'clock morning Steamboats. Those leaving at 12 o'clock, in ample season for the afternoon Steamboats. Also, those taking the Locomotive at 2, P. M. will arrive at Albany in season for the 4 o'clock Boats.

Passages may be secured at the office of Messrs. Thorp's & Sprague's, in Albany and Schenectady. Price, including stage fare, 75 cts.

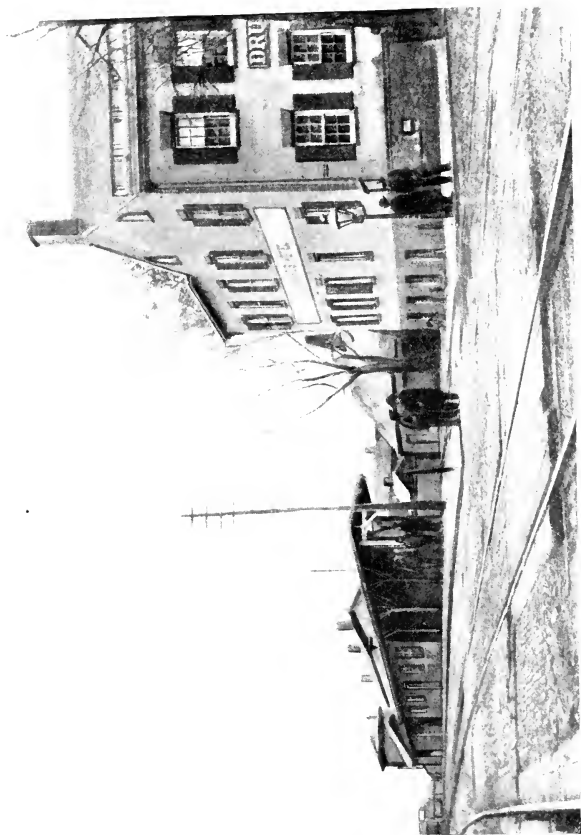
JOHN T. CLARK.

Agent of the H. & M. Railroad Co.

N. B. Passengers who may desire it, will be accommodated at each end of the Railway with tickets at 50 cents. Transportation at the ends of the Railroad will be furnished by Messrs. Thorp's & Sprague.

s22 tf

*The First Time-table of the Mohawk & Hudson Railway, 1831.*



1860. Drulard's Hotel, and New York Central Railway Station.

and assets on December 31, 1839—fourth, liabilities to same date—fifth, description and value of personal property—sixth, value of the real estate not required in operating the road—seventh, regulations and restrictions under which the income is kept and disbursed—eight, the measures adopted, or proposed, to reduce expenses—ninth, state of repair of the road and rolling stock and any other important information.

Thomas Palmer, the secretary, and John Costigan, the superintendent of the company, took the matter in hand and in January, 1840, submitted their report.

In 1832, the year the road began to operate, no account of the number of passengers was kept, but the receipts for carrying them were, \$51,600 and the cost, \$27,300. No freight was carried that year.

In 1833, 115,700 first class passengers were carried for \$69,300 at an expense of \$35,600. The freight from Albany was 2,100 tons and from Schenectady, 870, with receipts of \$3,700 and cost of \$1,000.

In 1834, 135,300 first class and 8,100 second class passengers were carried for \$86,200, at an expense of \$37,200. The freight from Albany was 5,200 and from Schenectady 11,300 tons; the receipts were \$12,700 and the expenses were, \$13,600.

In 1835 there were 164,100 first class and 8,600 second class passengers carried for \$84,700, at an expense of \$42,000. The freight from Albany was 10,500, and from Schenectady, 19,700 tons; the receipts were, \$26,200, and expenses, \$23,200.

In 1836 there were 152,800 first class and 6,600 second class passengers carried for \$103,400, at an expense of \$54,800. The freight from Albany was 12,800, and from Schenectady, 18,500 tons; the receipts were \$28,100, and the expenses, \$23,900.

In 1837 there were 130,100 first class and 7,900 second class passengers carried for \$97,700, at an expense of \$63,100. The freight from Albany was 6,300, and from Schenectady, 10,300 tons; the receipts were \$14,400, and the expenses, \$19,900.

In 1838 there were 134,100 first class and 9,400 second class passengers carried for \$101,000, at an expense of \$64,900. The freight from Albany was 8,900, and from Schenectady, 11,500 tons; the receipts were \$19,200, and expenses were \$19,200.

In 1839 there were 153,100 first class and 13,600 second class passengers carried for \$116,600, at an expense of \$59,000. The freight from Albany was 12,300, and from Schenectady 14,000 tons; the receipts were \$25,800, and the expenses \$25,400.

The total receipts for carrying freight for the seven years ending with 1839 were \$130,400, and the total expense \$126,500. An excess of but \$3,900 over the expenses. The passenger business showed a much better condition of affairs. The total receipts for the seven years, were \$692,800, and the expenses \$385,000, making the excess of receipts over expenses of \$307,800. While everyone knows that vigorous maturity must be preceded by youth and feeble infancy, the public has been accustomed, so long, to think of the New York Central Railroad by the thousand miles and its business by the million dollars that this tiny business of the parent company seems hardly possible. The number of tons of freight carried from Albany in the seven years was 58,300, and from Schenectady 86,500.

There was a great variation of fares for the single trip either way. From January 1 to April 12, 1833, it was 62 1-2 cents; to September 6, 75 cents; to March 9, 1834, 37 1-2 cents; to April 17, 1836, 50 cents; to August 25, 62 1-2 cents; and from August 26, 1836, to January 1, 1840, it was 75 cents. A concession was made to the citizens of the two cities, as they were sold return tickets for 62 1-2 cents each way. Local passengers in second class cars paid 37 1-2 cents and emigrants from the tow-boats, 31 1-4 cents each.

In this same period the freight rates were, from Schenectady to Albany, for freight from the canal boats, 62 1-2 cents per ton, but if a ton of freight was sent by a citizen of Schenectady, he had to pay one dollar a ton and if it was transhipped from the Saratoga Railroad the charge was \$1.25 a ton.

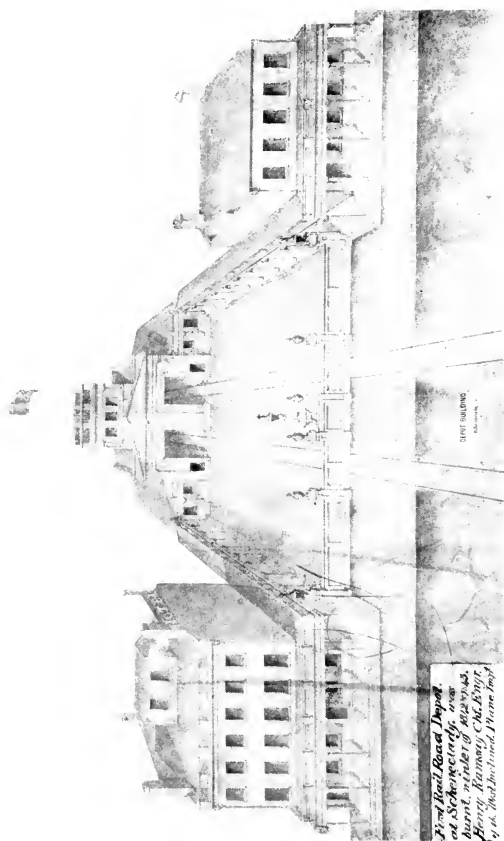
It was evidently the custom to "soak" shippers when the busy season began, for the report explains the reason for the large freight receipts in November and December, by saying: "This may be attributed to the anxiety of owners and forwarders of

produce to get the same to market before the closing of navigation, and also to the fact, that a number of canal boats, heavily freighted with flour, etc., were stopped at Schenectady and vicinity, by the sudden closing of the canal and were obliged to discharge their cargoes at that place, which otherwise would have been carried by canal to Albany." Then follows the case of conscience for taking advantage of necessity by over-charging. "In cases of this kind, when the press of business is great, owners and forwarders are willing (?) to advance the rate of toll, in consideration of the advantage they expect to gain by expedition, and the loss and risk sustained by delay."

The receipts for the year ending December 31, 1839, were \$155,531.52. Some of the items were as follows: Rent of tenements occupied by employes of the company, \$1,186.98; fuel sold to employes at cost, \$467.11; sale of horses, harnesses and sleighs to different persons, \$531.39; sale of old iron pipe, rope, lumber and iron safe, \$910; sale of land in Schenectady, \$1,095.42; sale of paving stones to Albany, \$324.75; carrying U. S. mail, \$4,688.66, all of which shows that the railroad was not above turning an honest cent in almost any kind of business.

Some of the expenses during the same period, were: Labor and material in the machine, blacksmith and woodworking shops, \$11,881.91; wages of men at Schenectady inclined plane (this was in the present Ninth Ward, formerly Mount Pleasant) \$2,505.73; the same in Albany, \$1,522.98; under the oddly mixed items, of salaries for president, secretary, oil, insurance, etc., \$4,993.76. Of this sum \$300 was paid every year to the president and \$1,000 to the secretary and they both survived it. The presidency was a fat job in those days. In 1839 the value of the entire property of the company was \$156,137.00.

The rolling stock of the road in 1839, consisted of 24 coaches, called "gothic," with a seating capacity for twenty passengers each. These cost about \$800 each. There were fifteen other coaches for passengers of a plainer style. The baggage of the traveling public (drummers were few in those days evidently)



*Grand Hotel Road Depot.  
at Schoenectady, near  
burnt, in 1892, by  
Henry, Railway Co. Eng.  
of the, that, burned, Maine Eng.*

GRAND HOTEL



was carried in three baggage wagons, while the better class of freight was carried in thirty-five covered wagons. There were forty-six "hulk" wagons, probably the grand-parent of the modern gondola car, fifteen stake wagons, for maintenance of way, now called construction cars; two old baggage wagons and one small freight wagon, and fifteen balance wagons for the inclined plane in Albany, and seventeen for the plane in Schenectady.

This inclined plane was located at the top of the bluff in Mount Pleasant, and it may be remarked incidentally, that the bluff in 1839 was much more abrupt than it is now. There were great windlasses at the top and bottom of the inclined plane, worked by a stationary engine. Around them was a great hempen cable, such as was used for ships. There were parallel tracks and on one were the balance wagons, loaded with stone and attached to the cable. On the other tracks was the incoming train, also attached to the cable on the other side. If the train was heavily loaded, all of the balance wagons were used as a counter poise, if lighter, some of them were left off, the purpose being to have the train a trifle heavier than the loaded balance wagons. When a train was to be raised from the foot of the plane, the balance wagons were a trifle heavier than the train. In this way the balance wagons being at the top of the plane would descend while the train was ascending. When the train reached the bottom of the plane horses were attached and it was pulled to the station on the bank of the great basin of the Erie canal. This basin was located somewhere near, and probably on the site of, Peckham & Wolf's lumber yard and the Mica Insulating Works on Dock street. This great basin was where the canal boats loaded and unloaded from and into the freight wagons of the Mohawk & Hudson and the Saratoga railroads and later the Utica railroad. The freight depot was an immense affair, one-half of it belonged to the M. & H. R. R. and was valued at \$18,275. The cable used on the Schenectady plane cost \$933; the other in Albany, being longer, cost \$1,301.

The company owned nine buildings containing thirteen tenements, at the top and bottom of the plane in Schenectady,

which were occupied by the superintendent and the working men. They were valued at \$11,000. The company also owned lots adjoining the basin worth \$10,000 and on the north side of the canal worth, \$2,000. The basin cost \$18,113.

There was an odd confusion in the minds of the management in regard to whether second class passengers were freight or simply human beings. In calling the attention of the stockholders to the fact, "that the expenses of transporting freight have absorbed nearly the whole of the income derived from that source, not including second class passengers, which we conceive do not strictly belong to freight." This lack of profits from freight is explained by the fact that the Erie Canal, owned by the State, was a powerful opponent, and that in order to compete with it, freight charges had to be reduced to those charged by the canal. The profits from freight in 1833 were \$2,679.01; in 1839, but \$455.10. Again is the uncertainty in regard to second class passengers displayed by the statement that: "\* \* \* freight received from and delivered to the Saratoga Railroad, yielded an income to this company in 1838, of \$7,122.73, exclusive of second class passengers." In 1839 the company's capital was one million dollars and that that sum was considered vast is shown by the three words being italicized in the report.



Hub. Mather. No. 11.  
1834

*Old Style Locomotive.*

## Chapter X.

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### GLEN-SANDERS.

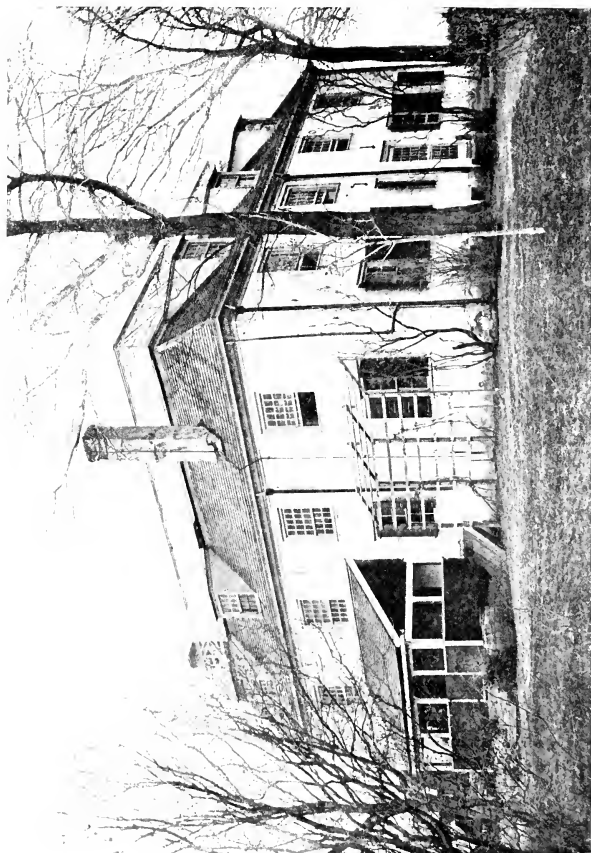


WAY up in the north of Scotland—the land of rugged, romantic scenery and of rugged, grand manhood; the land which has produced the greatest scholars and most courageous fighters; the only land, in Europe, which can boast of having never been conquered—originated the Glens of Scotia.

The father of Alexander Lindsey Glen, a Scottish Chief, intensely religious and patriotic, gave his life and estate to his king, Charles the First, as did so many of the Highland Chiefs. When he found that the price of his loyalty to his king was his life and property, he persuaded his son to flee across the North Sea to Protestant Holland, that refuge where the noble and simple might worship, according to the dictates of their consciences, instead of according to the dictates of one man. For a time, this son of a Highland Chief, remained in Holland and then sailed across the ocean to America.

Inheriting from his Scottish ancestors indomitable will, sound judgment and unbounded hospitality and charity, he founded a family, the descendants of which were as prominent in the Colonial governments, and later in the State governments, as they were socially and charitably.

There is every probability that Alexander Lindsey did not add the name of Glen till after he was obliged to flee from Scotland, the name being simply Lindsey. The greater number of families who were forced to flee from Scotland during the Reformation changed their names by dropping a portion of it or adding to it a syllable, or in the case of such families as possessed them, the name of the estate was added. The Lindseys of Scotland are famous. The branch of the family from which the Glens



*Glen-Sanders Mansion.*

of Schenectady County is descended is probably, Sir Alexander Lindsey, the younger brother of Sir James Lindsey, of Crawford, the hero of Otterburn.

By marriage with the heiress of Sterling, Sir Alexander became possessed of large estates in Angus and Inverness, one of them being Glensk. This was in the last half of the fourteenth century.

Sir James, the hero of Otterburn, dying without an heir, David, the son of Sir Alexander, became the chief of the family and, when David married the sister of Robert III, Robert raised David to the Earldom of Crawford, in 1398.

While the Glens of Schenectady were not in line for the title, that going by primogeniture to the eldest son, and they being descended from a younger son, they still are of the same blood as the hero of Otterburn, and Sir Alexander Lindsey, who married the sister of Robert III and became the Earl of Crawford.

The fine old Colonial mansion at the end of the Dike which, with the bridge, joins the pretty suburb of Scotia to the city of Schenectady, overlooking the Mohawk and bearing on its front the large hand-wrought iron letters and numerals: "A O 1713," is notable, for many reasons, to every American who inherits his citizenship from Colonial days.

It was built of material taken from the original mansion built by Alexander Lindsey Glen, the founder of the family in America, who was one of the original Fifteen Proprietors of Schenectady. This original Glen mansion was the first house built upon the north bank of the Mohawk river for the entire 135 miles of its length. Its second point of interest is that it was, for many generations, the place of safekeeping of Indian, Colonial and Revolutionary official documents and correspondence, and its third point of interest is that it stands on the property which has been in the family of the original proprietor of the estate for two hundred and forty-six years.

The original residence was built about 1659, on the bank of river, one hundred feet south of the present residence; but the

land upon which it stood has been entirely eaten away by the river and nothing of even the foundation now remains. This particular place was a favorite one with the Indians. On a knoll, a little to the east of, and midway between the sites of the two houses, was the spot on which they indulged in the gladsome pastime of burning their prisoners at the stake.

The original proprietor, Alexander Lindsey Glen, whom the Hollanders called Sander Leendertse, was born near Inverness, Scotland, about 1610. He was a partisan in the days of Charles I., and was obliged to flee to Holland, where he was warmly received and whence he emigrated with the early Dutch settlers to the Colony of New Netherlands, with his wife, who was Catharine Dongan. Mr. Glen was a man of liberal education, obtained in the land of his birth, a gentleman by birth and a man of large fortune, by inheritance. He was very Scotch in physique and temper and was endowed with a degree of catholicity which made him notable for his broad-minded tolerance for all denominations of the Christian faith and for his untiring efforts for the good, success and safety of others.

In 1643, Mr. Glen was agent of the Dutch West India Company, stationed at Fort Nassau, on the Delaware, where he had received a grant of land. In 1646 he was granted land in New Amsterdam, afterward New York, and was possessed of considerable other property, consisting of houses, land and cattle at Graves End, on Long Island. In 1658, he left for Schenectady, and built the stone mansion on the north bank of the Mohawk and named his estate "Scotia," in memory of the land of the thistle, the heather and of hardy manhood. The title to the Scotia estate was held from 1658 to 1665, under title granted by the rightful and original owners, the Mohawk Indians; in the latter year, he obtained the patent to the property from the representative of the Crown.

The flats along the river belonging to Scotia—the estate, not the present village—were free from timber and very fertile, for they had been cultivated by the Mohawk Indians for more years



*Abraham Glen House, Built in 1730, now the Residence of Mr. James Collins.*

than their traditions could number. The flats east of the residence down to a point near the present Freemans bridge, were known as the "cornfield," and were so designated in the deed from the Indians to Mr. Glen.

Mr. Glen's character appealed strongly to the Mohawks. They regarded him with respect and admiration, for, while he was kind and just, he was fearless—a quality which the Mohawks could understand much better than kindness—so whenever raids were made upon the white settlers, he, his family and his property, were exempt from their ferocity. He had also gained the admiration and even affection of the French who held Canada, by his many acts of kindness toward them, when captured by the hostile Mohawks of the valley, who were not of the portion of the tribe which had left the Mohawk valley for Canada, after their conversion to the Catholic faith.

In Mr. Glen's day, there was no Dutch Reformed Church,

nor any church nearer than Albany, but the Rev. Mr. Schatts went from Albany to Schenectady, once in three months, to administer the sacraments. This did not satisfy Mr. Glen's ideas of duty in the matter of attending worship, for he frequently made the journey to Albany, leaving his home on Saturday morning and returning on Monday night. In 1682, in order that Schenectady might be better provided for, he built, at his own expense, the first Dutch Reformed Church in Schenectady—the site of which is marked by a bronze tablet at the junction of State, Water and Church streets and Mill lane. As was the custom in those days, the church was, also, the town-hall. This church was given to the community and, in 1684, the Rev. Petrus Taschemaker became its first pastor. Mrs. Glen died in 1684 and Mr. Glen, in 1685, and both were buried under the church which he had built. As an original proprietor, Mr. Glen had a lot in Schenectady of two hundred feet frontage on Washington avenue and this residence was occupied by a descendant till the great fire of 1819, when it was destroyed.

Major John Alexander Glen, the youngest son of the original proprietor, built the present mansion, bearing the date of 1713. The house covers a large ground area and its rooms are large—many of them being more than twenty feet, each way, and the ceilings are lofty. The walls are built of stone and are very thick and strong. The timbers are massive. Some idea of the great size of the trees, which were found by the early white settlers, may be gained when it is known that the trunks of the trees, from which the timbers for the house were made, were first hewn square and then sawed twice through the middle, lengthwise, thus making four timbers of the log, each of which was two feet square. The hewing was done because it was easier than sawing, when the log was of so great diameter; and the sawing was resorted to, because it was the only means of dividing the square log into timbers small enough to handle. These great timbers are as sound, to-day, as they were when they were built into the house. They are cleverly dovetailed together, as no



builder could do it in this century, and are fastened with large pins of wood. All of the spikes and nails in the house are hand-wrought.

As has been said, nearly all of the original material of the first house was used for the present house and all of the interior wood-work was used, as far as it would go. This interior finish is very interesting, in that it shows the nicety of the work and the skill of the workmen. Every joint is either mortised or dove-tailed, and all the fastenings are wooden pins. The doors are very wide and their broad panels are made of one piece of first-growth pine, of a quality which would give a lumber-merchant, of to-day, an attack of heart-failure, from thinking of the price that he could obtain for it.

Major Glen, like his predecessors, was a man who never missed an opportunity to save a white captive from the cruel hands of the Mohawks. It made no difference to him whether the victim for the burning was Protestant or Catholic. This gained for him and his wife—she was a veritable “Mother in Israel,” honored and loved by White and Red—the profound regard of the French in Canada, whom the Mohawks of the valley dearly loved to capture and torture, as a means of revenge for having led away a portion of their tribe.

The Jesuit priests were untiring workers among the Indians for their conversion. Their patience and never-waning courage, under the most cruel torture, finally won the portion of the tribe of the Mohawks, whose headquarters were at the third castle of the Five Nations, called Caughnawaga. They embraced the Catholic faith and went to Canada with the Jesuit Fathers, settling near Montreal. This greatly angered the Mohawks who remained in the valley. They professed to favor Protestantism, not from religious conviction, but because it was the faith of the Dutch with whom they were friendly. Their reason for being friendly with the Dutch was entirely selfish at first. The Dutch could cater to their appetite for rum, but, most important of all, was the fact, that from them, they, the Indians, could obtain the more

destructive weapons and ammunition and wipe out a humiliating defeat by the Hurons and Algonquins, soon after Champlain's settlement in 1608. That they, the irresistible ones, whose presence in twos and threes inspired terror among the Indians of New England and the south, had been defeated and forced to flee from the Canadian Indians, whom they held in contempt, was more than they could bear. Since the Dutch could provide them with muskets and ammunition, they loved the Dutch. This defeat by the despised Indians of the tribes named, was due to the fire-arms furnished them by the French..

One day a party of Mohawks brought as a prisoner, a Jesuit priest, to the home of Major Glen, where they intended to torture him, on the knoll previously mentioned as the torture-ground. They asked Major Glen to lock the priest in his cellar till the morning, when the devilry would begin.

Major Glen and his wife determined to save the priest, but they realized that it must be done without offending the Indians, otherwise, they would lose their influence with them. He pretended to fear the priest, saying that they all were possessed of magical powers and could not be confined by any lock. He told the Indians that they could lock him in the cellar, but that he would have nothing to do with it; so he gave them one key to the cellar and said nothing of the other, which he had. The Indians, profiting by the trade instincts of their Dutch friends, bought rum in Schenectady and drank themselves into insensibility.

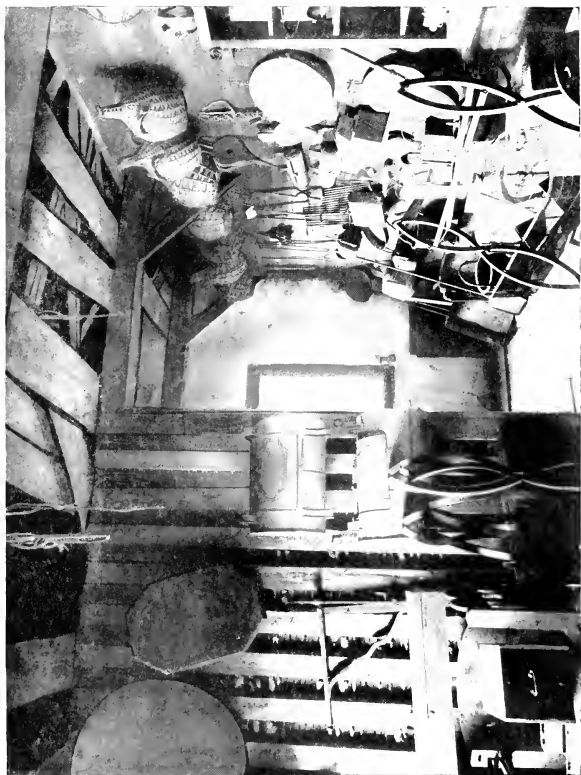
Major Glen had remarked in the hearing of the Indians that he should send a wagon to Albany in the morning, for salt; so, when the morning came and the Indians, who were suffering from an attack of, "after the ball," saw a wagon, in which was a large cask, start for Albany, their suspicions were not aroused. Had they known that the cask, with but one head, was covering the priest, they might have claimed a substitute from the Glen family. When they did go to him with a report that the priest was gone; they were reminded that they had been told that a priest could not be kept by any lock; that he had used his magic to escape through

the key-hole. This, and similar acts, gained the good-will and esteem of the French—the more so, as the Glens were known to be staunch Protestants—and bore fruit of a most acceptable variety; for, when the French and Indian raid was made, which resulted in the historical massacre of 1690, orders were given, by the French commanders, that no injury must be done to the Glens, their relatives nor their property. Not only were these orders strictly adhered to, but Major Glen was permitted to point out relatives in Schenectady, who were spared, until so many had been pointed out, that the Indians became suspicious that even a white man could not have so many relatives, and so the merciful work was stopped.

Col. Jacob Glen, the eighth child of Major Glen, inherited the Scotia estate from his father, as well as all the admirable qualities of the family. He was born in 1690 and died in 1762. Colonel Glen was commander of the military forces west of Albany, numbering 3,000 men.

It was during his proprietorship that the Scotia mansion began to be the receptacle of public documents, for their safe-keeping. This old mansion contained the military records of the Colony, with a complete list of the men doing military duty; old Dutch and British grants, patents, and commissions, among them being those which bore the signature of every governor from and including Governor Dongan; and later, all the public documents and letters of Sir William Johnson, who was Indian Commissioner for the entire British possessions in America. Among these, were treaties signed by the totem and other marks of Indian chiefs of many tribes and the signatures of the governors of nearly every Colony. This valuable collection also contained public documents of the Revolutionary days, and letters, commissions, private diaries, kept by the officers, and the minutes of the Sons of Liberty.

Soon after the breaking out of the Civil War, when paper was in unusual demand, about a ton of these old papers were sold, as junk, their historic value not being appreciated. Fortunately,



*Attic in Glen-Sanders Mansion.*

few of the very old Dutch and British papers were included in this lot, so that a large collection remained in the possession of the family, till 1903, when all that did not relate to the Glen-Sanders families and those with whom they had inter-married, were sold by the present owner of the property.

The present proprietor, Mr. C. P. Sanders, decided upon this course, for several reasons. One was that the documents had to do with so many of the old Dutch and Anglo-Saxon families, that he was receiving requests from all over the country from persons who were, or hoped they were, descendants of the early settlers, asking him to look the matter up. This was a nuisance; and, besides, the collection being of public interest, he felt it should be placed where it could be cared for and be open to inspection by those who wished to inspect it. In addition to this, many persons came to Scotia to see the famous old mansion, and he frequently found that, after these visitations, some of the papers would be missing. As the State was the proper custodian of these documents of Colonial and Revolutionary days, they were first offered to the State Library in Albany, but as there was no money available, the library could not secure them. They were then offered to the city of Schenectady, through some of its citizens, who professed to be interested in it and its history and who considered themselves public-spirited men; but the idea was treated lightly, until they were finally disposed of to an antiquarian of Albany, when the fact that they were gone forever, emphasized the seriousness of the loss. As a matter of fact, this collection of old records and documents, relating to families and official affairs of the Colony and State, should be the property of Schenectady and the historical-room of the free

Public Library should be their place of safe-keeping.

To return to Colonel Glen; his only child was a daughter,



*Old Cradle in the Sanders Mansion.*

Deborah, who was married to John Sanders, of Albany, in 1739. It was through this marriage that the Sanders name became connected with the Glen estate of Scotia. Mr. Sanders, who was a man of great wealth for even these days, purchased the entire estate in 1765, for \$10,000, which, in those days, was a very large amount of money.

Strangely enough, the Sanders family, like the Glen family, was Dutch, by adoption, members of it having fled to Holland at about the same time that the Glens did, and for the same reason, because of their fearless opposition to the corruption of the British representatives of the Roman Church. This ancestor, whose family was forced to flee to Holland, was burned at the stake, in Coventry, by the gentlemen of England who dishonored their country and polluted the name of the Roman Church, solely to gain their own selfish ends, as represented either by money, pre-ferment or power.



*Sanders Tablet in Allhallows Church, London.*

The tablet in the wall of the church in London of which this hero-martyr, the friend and companion, in prison, of the great Cranmer, was rector, bears the following record: "In Memory of the Rev. Mr. Lawrence Saunders, M. A., Rector of Allhallows, Bread street, who, for sermons here preached, in defence of the doctrines of the Reformation of the Church of England from ye corruptions of the Church of Rome, suffered Martyrdom ye third year of Queen Mary, being burnt at Coventry, Feb'y ye 8, 1555."

Lawrence Sanders—or Saunders, as the original spelling was—was born in Oxfordshire, where his father was a considerable land-owner. Young Lawrence was sent to Eaton, and, after finishing there, to King's College, Cambridge. After a while, he thought he would like to become a merchant; so he was sent to London and articed to one of the great merchants, who, afterward, became Sheriff of London. The youth soon became disgusted with business and all that had to do with it. He told his patron of his feelings, and he released him from his obligations, so Lawrence returned to King's College and took his degree. He entered holy orders toward the end of the reign of Edward VI. and became one of the famous preachers of the period when the Reformation began. While fearless in denouncing the corruption of the men who professed to represent the pure principles of the ancient Christian Church, he was not of that class of preachers who disgust the thoughtful by violence and religious hysteria.

As one of the chief champions of reformation, with Cranmer and the other heroic men, who bore the agonies of fire, rather than do what they believed to be wrong, Lawrence Saunders was summoned before the ecclesiastical and crown-authorities, on trumped-up and ridiculous charges. When it was found that he fearlessly continued his work and preached for reformation, he was imprisoned and was finally burnt, in Coventry. The widow and her two sons escaped to Holland. Ninety years after, another widow, Elsie Saunders, and her two sons, Robert and John, came

to New Amsterdam, about 1646. It was the son, John, who married Deborah, the daughter of Colonel Glen.

The brothers went to Albany and started, by trading with the Indians, from whom they bought pelts. These were shipped to Europe and, in return, were brought back from across the water, the goods which were needed, or which were luxuries in the colony. Their business grew to immense proportions and, before long, their shipments went to nearly all the great capitals of the world, especially to the Indies.

John, son of John and Deborah Sanders, lived in the Scotia mansion—his father and mother having moved to the town residence on Washington avenue. The Indians had always been

free guests at the homes in the Mohawk valley, and especially was this true in regard to the home of the Glens and Sanders. About the time the War of Independence began, the Oneida Indians were particularly-frequent visitors in and about the Scotia estate, and this fact nearly caused the death of young Mrs. Sanders, when two Oneida warriors engaged in a serious quarrel in the



*The Stairs up which Mrs. Sanders was going when the Tomahawk was thrown.*



kitchen. Finally, one of the two tried to brain the other with his tomahawk. The attacked one fled out and around to the front of the house and inside the door. Behind this door was—and still is—a large, shallow coat-closet. The fleeing Indian hid in this closet, just as his pursuer reached the front of the house and just as Mrs. Sanders was going up-stairs. The pursuing Indian, seeing some one on the stairs, and thinking it was the other Indian, threw his tomahawk, which was somewhat wide of its mark, and struck the baluster-rail, cutting out a chunk which is still plainly to be seen, and is a daily reminder, to the present generation, of the conditions in which their ancestors lived.

In those early days, the freighting in the winter, when the ice on the river closed navigation, was done on sleds drawn by horses, between Albany and Utica. The number of these sleds ran into scores, daily passing to and from Albany.

One day Mr. Sanders—the second John, whose wife escaped the tomahawk—while out driving, met a long line of sleds. He turned out of the beaten track, to let the heavily-loaded sleds pass. Toward the end of the line was a driver, who was a great bully and, at the same time, a coward. As he passed Mr. Sanders, he struck him a heavy blow across the shoulder with the long lash of his whip. When the line passed, Mr. Sanders turned and followed it, till it stopped at the first tavern. He entered the bar-room with the crowd and, gaining their attention, told them that one of their number had committed an unprovoked assault upon him—a peaceful citizen, on the highway—a condition of affairs which could not be permitted. He demanded that the guilty man be pointed out to him. No one responded, so Mr. Sanders said:

“I am a magistrate of this district; one of you has committed an assault upon the highway, and if he is not delivered up to me, I shall commit you all. Mr. Sanders was well known to the majority of the drivers and the reputation of himself and his family for doing just what they said they would do, resulted in the offender being persuaded to step out and confess. Mr.

Sanders looked at the bully calmly, told him that such doings could not and would not be permitted within his jurisdiction; that he purposed to have all travelers on the highway, within his jurisdiction, safe from bullies and brutes.

"Now," said he, "you may have your choice of being tried, right here, or of taking a thrashing at my hands. This kind of sport must be stopped."

The driver thought a moment; recalled the load of freight which could not be delivered, should he be placed in "goal" and, not knowing Mr. Sanders nor his reputation for great strength, he chose the thrashing. Tradition says that he got it; so warm and heartily did the justice lay it on, that the fame of it traveled far, and, from that time on, when would-be tough drivers had to pass through Mr. Sanders' judicial territory, they metaphorically, wore their Sunday-clothes and a high-church expression of countenance.

Nearly all of the old Dutch families of Colonial days married into the Glen and Sanders families; so that, to-day, the Livingstons, Van Rensselaers, Ten Broecks, Douws, Fondas, Beekmanns, Schuylers, Ten Eycks, Van Dycks, can trace descent from Alexander Lindsey Glen, one of the original proprietors of Schenectady, and the founder of the family in America.



*Ornate Fire Bellows in Sanders Mansion.*

## Chapter XI.

### JAMES DUANE



THE Schenectady County family having more to do with the making of the Nation, than any other, was that of Duane. What the Glens had been to the Colony, the Duanes were to the birth of the Nation and the reorganized State of New York.

The first of the name in America was Anthony Duane, a young man of gentle birth from Cong, County Galway, Ireland. When little more than a youth, Anthony Duane was purser in the British Navy, with the squadron stationed at New York. He was so well pleased with the New World Colony and the society of New York, as well as with its opportunities for business, that he resigned from the Navy and settled in New York where he was a merchant up to the time of his death. Anthony Duane's second wife—the mother of the Schenectady Duanes—was Miss Altea Kettletas, a daughter of Abraham Kettletas, for many years an alderman of New York and one of its wealthiest merchants. She died in May, 1741. Mr. Duane married again, his third wife being the widow of Thomas Lynch, of Flushing, Long Island. Her maiden name was Riker. Anthony Duane died in August, 1774, in his home in New York. The children of Anthony and Altea Duane were: Richard, who died, while a midshipman in the Royal Navy, at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1740; Abraham, a post captain in the Royal Navy, who died at sea in 1767; and James, with whom there is the greatest interest as he was the proprietor of Duanesburg, in Schenectady County.

James Duane was born in New York City, on February 6, 1732. After completing his school days he continued his education by studying for the profession in which he became the head

in middle life and continued to grow in repute and fame till his death. He entered the law office of James Alexander, one of the Colony's most notable attorneys, and was admitted to practice in August, 1754. His biographer said of him: "His law register



*Judge James Duane.*

and papers show he was soon entrusted with a large professional business and that he retained his clients so long as he continued a practicing lawyer." Two years after his admission he was given a warrant, by Attorney General William Kemp, to act for him in crown cases. Mr. Duane's ideas and ambition were beyond official patronage, so in April, 1757, he resigned, to devote all his time to private practice.

He married Mary, the eldest daughter of Colonel Robert Livingston, of Livingston Manor, on October 21, 1759. This alliance gave him an intimate acquaintance with the chief subject of interest at that time, viz.: the boundaries of the Colony, a subject frequently in litigation and of almost daily discussion. Sometime before his marriage he had been active in respect to the boundary between New York and Massachusetts and his marriage increased his interest in the subject, because a considerable portion of Livingston Manor was claimed by Massachusetts. Thus, he became an authority on the subject of jurisdiction and territorial rights. He was for years always the attorney, council or commissioner in private and public cases, for the Colony and later for the State of New York, against claimants in New Jersey,

Massachusetts, Connecticut, and the famous fights over the New Hampshire grants, also the French grants in the Champlain valley. His "State of the Rights of New York" was taken from a letter from himself to Edmond Burke, by order of the Board of Trade and published, as being an epitome of the subject. His calm judgment and wisdom did much to off-set the influence of the other New England States against New York, in the fight over the New Hampshire grants, which was thrashed out in Congress during the Revolution. He also succeeded in restraining New York from resorting to violence when the irritating conditions made violence seem the only method for vindication.

Some of the cases in which he was retained, that were of general interest, on account of the principle involved, were: Trinity Church against Flandreau and others; Sir James Jay against King's College; the very important case, to Schenectady, of Schermerhorn against the Trustees of Schenectady; the King, on the information of the Attorney General against Lieutenant-Governor Colden. Mr. Duane was attorney for the defendant, Colden, and it required real courage of the highest moral type for, while the King was the technical, Governor Monkton was the actual plaintiff and, as Chancellor, he was also the judge. Other lawyers had refused to take the case for fear of Monkton's enmity. Strangely enough not long after this suit, Mr. Duane was called upon to give an opinion against his former client, Lieutenant-Governor Colden. It was in a suit in which Colden, representing the Government, had given a construction of his commission and instructions, which were reversed by the opinion given by Mr. Duane. To again quote his biographer: "In both cases we see that fearlessness of governmental authority, which, a few years later, led him to risk his life and estate in our War for Independence."

As a Churchman, Mr. Duane was as active as he was in the practice of law and in the making of the Nation. He was a vestryman of old Trinity Church in New York for a number of years before the Revolution and after the British left New

York in 1783, till he left the city to reside upon his estate of Duanesburg, in 1794, he was church warden of Trinity. He built at his own expense the Episcopal Church on his Duanesburg property, which was consecrated by Bishop Provost, formerly rector of Trinity Church. This church, which is still the parish



*Christ's Episcopal Church, Duanesburg. Built by Judge Duane in 1794.*

church, is the only church building in Schenectady County which has in no way been altered since the day it was built. Although the building is not as old as is St. George's in Schenectady city, the parish is considerably older and the building was consecrated sixty-six years before St. George's, the consecration of the latter being in 1859. Mr. Duane and his wife are buried under the church which he built and gave to the Diocese.

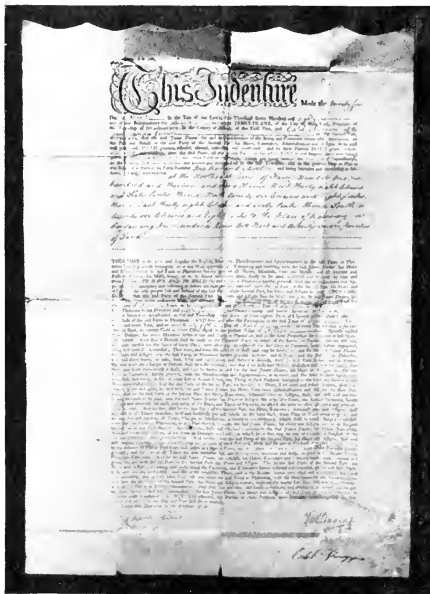
As a landlord, Mr. Duane had vast possessions. In 1767 he owned sixty-four thousand acres in that part of the Colony of

New York which later became a part of the State of Vermont. This property was obtained by purchase, not by grant and when that part of New York was resigned to Vermont he was awarded but \$30,000 for the entire property and that was not paid till after his death. A part of his inheritance from his father was six thousand acres of land in Schenectady County. This was eventually increased to what is now the Town of Duanesburg, an area of sixty thousand acres. In 1765 he began to arrange for the settlement of this vast estate, located in the most picturesque and lovely part of the county, among the hills which continue into the Helderberg mountains and terminate in the Catskills. At this time the people of the Colony were averse to settling in this part of the Colony, chiefly on account of the representations of the agents of Sir William Johnson, who were effecting settlements for him elsewhere and wished to secure all the available settlers for his property, so Mr. Duane secured sixteen Pennsylvania Germans who made the first permanent settlement on the estate. The estate was made a township on March 13, 1765. The land was surveyed into farms of one hundred acres and apportioned to the settlers on quit rent deeds—one of which is shown on the following page, at first with rents payable in products of the soil and later at the rate of fifteen cents per acre. An idea of Mr. Duane's keen sense of right and justice may be obtained from the fact that he never sold an improved farm to any person other than the man who made the improvements.

These early settlers of Duanesburg found themselves on hills from eight to fifteen hundred feet elevation, well watered by springs and brooks and covered by a virgin forest of pines and hardwoods of great size, in which roamed bears, wolves and the dreaded lynx. When the work of clearing was well along, the soil was found to be fertile and the surface of a peculiar character. On the main hills were lower elevations from fifty to one hundred feet above the general level, "hog-backed" in shape, with their tops almost level or a gentle, sloping grade to the brows, when they fell away sharply. These "hog-backs" run at every con-

ceivable angle to one another, thus forming charming little valleys and dales through which flowed tiny streams of spring water. It was on the tops of several of the highest of these little hills that

Mr. Duane and his heirs built their fine old Colonial Mansions. That the white man was not the discoverer of their charms, nor of the grand scenery, is shown by evidence of Indian encampments of somewhat permanent nature, for arrowheads and other Indian implements are frequently found, some of the arrow and spear heads exhibiting most beautiful workmanship.



Quit-Claim Deed.

In 1796 Judge Duane began the erection of his mansion on the top of the highest of the Duanesburg hills, but it was finished by his heirs as his death occurred suddenly from heart trouble, in February, 1797. Besides the great estates in Vermont and Duanesburg, he owned valuable property in New York City, consisting of houses and what he called his farm, a portion of which is now Gramercy Park, and a house in Schenectady where his family lived during many of the years in which he was devoting himself to his country, while the War for Independence was in progress.



This brings up the character in which Judge Duane was greatest; that of a disinterested patriot; friend of Washington; and legal advisor to the young Nation.

Again to quote his biographer: "When faithful and skilful agents were sought for in 1774, to devise means to regain those rights which England had grossly infringed, and secure them from future violation, Mr. Duane was naturally one of the earliest selected. He was a member of most of the committees in the City of New York, raised to devise plans of opposing the British encroachments, and when the general Congress of 1774 was determined upon and the Colonial Assembly had refused to appoint any delegate to act, Mr. Duane was elected by the people, not only of that city, but of several counties. \* \* \* The Massachusetts members of Congress started early from their homes and arrived at New York before Mr. Duane and his colleagues had set out. \* \* \* in the journal of John Adams it is apparent that Mr. Duane was the most prominent man in the New York delegation."

When he left his home in New York, on August 31, 1774, to go to the Congress in Philadelphia, he was accompanied by a great number of people, who with music and flags were going to the Broad street ferry to see him off. Before leaving them, he addressed them and it does not require a vivid imagination to picture the event in the mind nor to guess at the subject upon which he spoke. He was leaving the city of his birth and the people who held him in such high esteem and who reposed such faith in him, that they had chosen him to represent them, in the step to be taken by the Colonists which would result in death and oblivion, or in obtaining a recognition of their rights by the King. In 1774 the idea of total separation from the Old Country was in the minds of few, if any, of the Colonists. He arrived in Philadelphia on the day set for the meeting of the Congress, September 5, and almost his first act showed his keen sense of the respect and courtesy due to others. The State House and Carpenter's Hall had been offered to the delegates. The latter was first inspected

and a motion to accept that hall was offered by one of the delegates, but Mr. Duane objected to this until the courtesy of first inspecting the State House had been paid to the Speaker of the Assembly, through whom the offer of that building had been made. That which took place on that momentous occasion is a matter of National history, the part taken by Mr. Duane only, concerns this account.

Mr. Duane was appointed, with Mr. Jay, as the New York representative to the committee "On the Rights of the Colonies." This committee met daily from the seventh to the twenty-second of September and reported on the latter date, the New York delegation favoring a demand for the rights of the Colonies without total separation for Great Britain. Mr. Duane's preamble and resolutions were submitted and adopted in spirit, or in the actual wording, by the Congress. It is an interesting fact that the plan written by Benjamin Franklin in 1754 for united colonies, is in the possessions of the descendants of Mr. Duane.

Congress adjourned in October, 1774, to meet in May, 1775. Mr. Duane returned to his home, having paid all of his expenses connected with the Congress from his own pocket. In addition, he was a liberal contributor to the fund for the relief of the people of Boston and to all of the patriotic public celebrations and entertainments given in New York in 1774-75.

In April, 1775, he was elected a delegate to the Provincial Congress which met in New York on the twentieth and was elected by this Congress to the more important one to meet in Philadelphia in May. After appointing Washington commander-in-chief of the army it had authorized the raising of; and assuming all the powers of government, Congress adjourned from August 2 to September 5 and Mr. Duane went to Albany to be present at an Indian treaty. On this occasion he presented the renowned Mohawk, Chief Abraham, with a handsome tobacco box of silver and an item in his private expense book shows that £5 was paid for it. He returned to Congress on September 12, and being called by his native state to assist in framing a state

government, he sacrificed his personal desires and ambition to be one of those to be present in Carpenters' Hall on July 4, 1776, by leaving Philadelphia on May 31, 1776 for New York City. But for his strong sense of duty to his State, he would have been in Philadelphia on the day the Independence of the Colonies was declared and Schenectady would have had the honor of the name of one of its citizens being signed to the Declaration of Independence.

Mr. Duane took his seat in the Provincial Congress on June 2 and four days later obtained leave of absence to secure a home for his family. He did not return to New York till the autumn of 1783, when peace was declared, the British taking the city soon after he left. In April, 1777, he returned to the Congress in Philadelphia and remained there till December of that year when he joined his family at Livingston Manor. In the meantime, on May 13, 1777, the Provincial Congress gave him a vote of thanks for his long and faithful service. In that same year he was one of a committee of three to arrange the articles of confederation, already agreed to by Congress, and to alter its phraseology without changing its spirit. In 1778 Governor Clinton was asked to appoint a commissioner of Indian affairs for the Northern Department. The Governor gave the appointment to Mr. Duane on April 2, 1778. In the summer of that year he was seriously ill, and although not yet recovered in strength, he returned to his congressional duties in Philadelphia in November, as he had been reappointed in the October preceding. He remained in attendance at Congress till September, 1779, when he obtained leave of absence to visit his family. In the succeeding October he was appointed one of a committee of three to collect evidence in the matter of the boundary between New York and Vermont, and in the succeeding November, he was reappointed to Congress and remained there till the winter of 1780, when he left to attend to the boundary dispute. In 1781 Mr. Duane was twice the guest of General Washington at Morristown. In January, 1782, he attended the meeting of the Legislature in Albany and took his

seat as senator, after which he returned to Congress. In November, 1783, after ten years of faithful service, he retired from his congressional duties. He was the only New York delegate to serve continuously in Congress from its first meeting in 1774, till the close of the Revolution. Mr. Duane was the author of the resolutions of thanks to the army, adopted by Congress, which had fought for and obtained the Independence of the Colonies.

In the autumn of 1783 he was elected by the Legislature one of the Council for the Southern District of New York and on November 25 of that year, when he, with the other patriots, returned to New York city, he found the greater portion of his property in a sad state. His houses on Pine street—then called King street—and the house at the corner of Fly Market and Water street were not habitable. That portion of New York known as Gramercy Park was owned by Mr. Duane and the twenty acres of which it was a portion, he called his farm. This property and the house upon it was in good condition as it had been used by one of the British generals as his residence. It was at this time that his election as church warden of Trinity, already referred to, took place.

There is a tradition in King's book, "The Progress of New York During the Last Fifty Years," that a winding creek flowing through the Duane farm, called by the Dutch, "Crummassie-Vly," was corrupted by the successors of the Dutch into Gramercy and that the name was made a fixture by S. B. Ruggles, who, having purchased a portion of the Duane farm, dedicated to the public the sixty-six lots, now comprising the park, in 1831, giving it the name of Gramercy Park. There was but one provision attached to the gift, viz.: that ten dollars a lot should be paid annually forever, for the maintenance for the park. It is also of interest, that King speaks of the value of these sixty-six lots, as being two hundred thousand dollars.

After the war the residents of New York began to resume their commercial and professional occupations which had been interrupted for so many years. To do this was Mr. Duane's

intention, but those who knew him had other plans for him and for their good. In those days to be mayor of New York was a high honor, for the man was chosen for his worth and integrity. The Common Council of the city petitioned the Governor to appoint Mr. Duane. The petition was granted and he was appointed on February 5, 1784. The reason given in the petition for his selection was: "That no one is better qualified, so none will be more acceptable to us and our constituents at large than Mr. Duane. Few have sacrificed more or deserve better from their country." This was a busy office in those days, for the mayor presided over the city, civil and criminal courts and was in the commission of Oyer and Terminer for the county. By request of Judge Hobart of the Supreme Court, Mr. Duane, as judge of Oyer and Terminer, delivered the charge to the first Grand Jury summoned in that court after the war. Mr. Duane was mayor for six years; with the exception of two years he was State Senator, from 1783 to '90, when his appointment to a Federal office made longer service impossible.

The appointment to this Federal office was the highest honor he had yet received, for, while the judgeship of the United States District Court is an important and dignified office, the fact that Mr. Duane was chosen by President Washington personally, from all the many splendid men who were available, for the reason given by Washington: \* \* \* "I have endeavored to bring into high offices of its administration such characters as will give stability and dignity to our National Government," was the greatest honor of all. That Mr. Duane fully appreciated the honor of being chosen by Washington for this high office; that it was an entire surprise to him and gave him the greater delight on this account, is shown by the following extract from a letter to his wife:

"I received a message that Col. Hamilton wished to speak with me. He asked me to walk in to a private room and there, to my surprise, informed me that he was sent by the President to know whether I would accept the office of District Judge of the

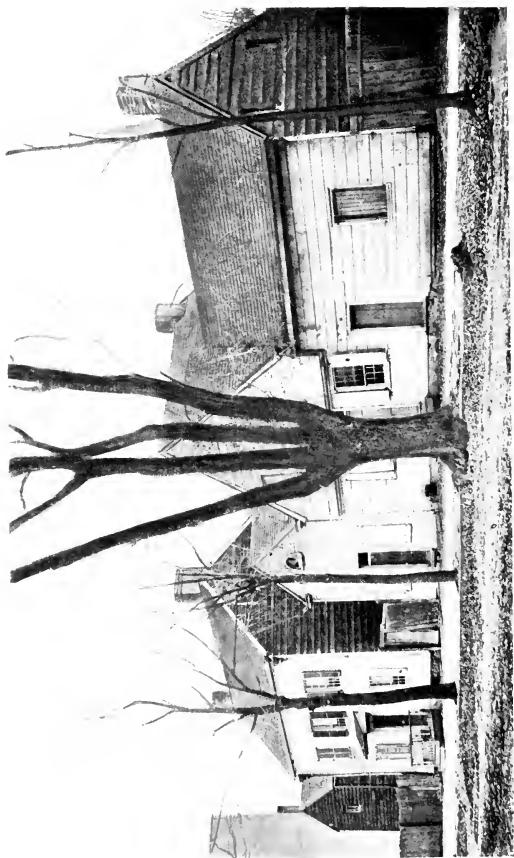
United States. I told him that I had never solicited, expected or even wished for an office from the President. On enquiry from Colonel Hamilton these were the circumstances of the affair: Very great interest had been made for Chief Justice Morris and for Mr. Harrison. When the point was to be decided, Colonel Hamilton and Mr. Jay were present. The President observed that he conceived a more responsible appointment than either and named me. Hamilton and Jay declared themselves of the same opinion. I have received an invitation to dine with the President to-morrow and shall then receive my commission, which I owe solely to his regard and good opinion of me."

For five years Judge Duane continued as judge of this court, many of the most important cases, involving international questions, coming before him. Finally, after forty years of strenuous labor in the interest of his country and state, on March 10, 1794, Judge Duane resigned as Judge of the United States Court, and as church warden of Trinity. The vestry adopted resolutions expressing their feelings for him and their regret at losing him. This was sent to him by Bishop Provost, in a personal letter, in which the Bishop expressed his feelings in the matter. Judge Duane went to Schenectady in a few days to remain there till the mansion he intended to erect on his Duanesburg estate should be completed, but his death occurred before the house was ready for occupancy.

As an unselfish patriot, he was regarded by Washington with confidence, affection and admiration and as a statesman he was honored by Washington and the other great men of that day. As a Churchman, he was one of the most active in uniting all the members of the Episcopal Church under one constitution and in obtaining the consecration of the first American Bishop. While he was a staunch Churchman, he was at the same time one of the champions of religious liberty. He was a generous giver to all public and private charities. A striking instance was shown of this characteristic as well as of his wisdom, when appointed Mayor of New York. The city was in a delapidated condition and its

people were in distress from the effects of British occupancy, so, instead of giving the customary entertainment when entering upon the duties of mayor, he sent a note to the Common Council saying: \* \* \* "But when I reflect upon the want and distress which are so prevalent at this season, I flatter myself that my declining it (the entertainment) will be justified by your approbation. Rather permit me, gentlemen, to entreat you to take the trouble of distributing for me, twenty guineas, toward the relief of my suffering fellow citizens in your respective wards. My liberality on so laudable an occasion, is limited by the shock which has affected my private fortunes in the progress of the war." Mayor Duane's suggestion that the clergy of the city should preach charity sermons and take up collections for the distressed, was carried out and the Mayor and Common Council attended the Dutch Church, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Livingston, for the purpose of stimulating the liberality of others by their presence. Judge Duane was an honorary member and on the committee of correspondence of the Order of Cincinnati. He was survived by his son, James C.; his elder daughter, Mary, who married Gen'l William North, and his younger daughter, Sarah, who married George W. Featherstonhaugh. The oil portrait in the City Hall, New York, is a copy of the one done by Peal at the close of the Revolution.





1850. Peck Property, Union Street. Present Location Ellis Mansions.



## Chapter XII.

### FEATHERSTONHAUGH.



THE family of Featherstonhaugh is older than the United Kingdoms of Great Britain and Ireland, for it is a Saxon family of the feudal days, away back on the borders of dream-time.

At the time of the Norman Conquest, the feudal castle and estate was in Northumberland, on the Tyne. This fine old specimen of feudal days with its massive tower, supported on great arches, stands to-day as it was originally built, with the additions by the successive Featherstonhaughs, in the centuries which followed the one far back in time when the first huge block of stone was put in place, with the exception, that the interior has been refitted and modernized in accord with the present ideas of domestic luxury.

It was here that Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh was slain. This foray was mentioned by Scott in his "Marmion," in Canto I. The Castle XIII, where,

"The northern harper rude, chanted a rhyme of deadly feud,  
How the fierce Thirwalls and Riddleys all,  
Stout Willimondswick,  
And Hardriding Dick,  
And Hugie of Hawdon, and Will o' the wall  
Have set on Sir Albany Featherstonhaugh,  
And taken his life at the deadman's-shaw."

This foray in which Sir Albany was killed is described at greater length in "Border Minstrelsy."

The last of the name to occupy the castle was Sir Matthew Featherstonhaugh, who sold the estate to Lord Wallace, in 1745. Sir Matthew purchased an estate in Sussex, which he called "Uppark", and built on it a fine baronial residence. This was

left to his heir, Sir Harry, who died childless, in 1846, the estate going to his wife. Sir Harry and George W. Featherstonhaugh, who built the large mansion on the shore of Featherstonhaugh lake Duaneburg, beside being related, were intimately acquainted, Mr. Featherstonhaugh being a frequent visitor at "Uppark", when he was in England.

George William Featherstonhaugh, the founder of the American branch of the family, was one of the most remarkable men of the nineteenth century—in a way, perhaps the most remarkable man of that century. Although possessed of wealth which made a life of indolent ease possible, his whole life was devoted to travel for pleasure and investigation; to the study of geology and exploration for the United States Government; to important diplomatic service for his own country—Great Britain—and to the establishment of the railroad in America, as a means of opening the vast territory of the interior and of connecting, for commercial purposes, the great markets of the country. That he was the discoverer of the possibilities of the railroad and the actual founder of the present vast railroad systems of this continent and that he worked, single-handed, for fifteen years against ridicule and unbelief, will be shown later. Besides all this, Mr. Featherstonhaugh was the intimate acquaintance and friend of America's greatest statesmen—in the days when statesmen were great and not merely subtile politicians—and the friend of kings. Personally, he was a man of great height, being six feet two inches, of powerful physique, and was possessed of a highly cultivated mind and of a fine spirit. He was a doer of things, from his university days to the day of his death, at the age of eighty-six.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh was born in London, England, in 1780, a few months after the death of his father. Owing to the unsettled and dangerous conditions surrounding residence in London, because of the Lord George Gordon Riots—which Dickens made familiar to the English speaking world in his "Barnaby Rudge"—Mrs. Featherstonhaugh moved from London

to Scarsboro, in Yorkshire, with her children and it was here that Mr. Featherstonhaugh spent his youth and prepared for his university course. He received his university degree at the age of twenty-one and immediately thereafter began to indulge his love for travel and the acquisition of knowledge. He traveled in Italy, Switzerland and France for two years, and at the age of twenty-six, had so far mastered the languages of those countries and of Spain, that he could speak and write them with the same fluency as his native English. He was, later, a fine Greek and Latin scholar and could converse as readily in Latin as in any of the modern languages that he had mastered. He was also an accomplished musician.

In the middle of the first decade of the nineteenth century, the Bird of Freedom was doing a deal of screaming. The American people were beginning to lose some of the dignified repose of Washington's day and were beginning to take on national airs and graces and to become proficient performers upon the horn—all of which attracted the attention of Europe toward the lusty young nation.

In 1806 Mr. Featherstonhaugh decided to visit the United States for pleasure and to study the people and their institutions. He brought with him letters to many of the more prominent families and spent two years in the cities of the north Atlantic states. When he left England for America, he probably had no more idea that he would fall in love with and marry an American girl, than that he would, some day, be king. He did so, however, and the meeting with his future wife was of a most romantic nature.

In 1808 Mr. Featherstonhaugh was in Philadelphia and it so happened that Madam Duane, the widow of Judge James Duane, of New York City and Schenectady, was in the city and that her family was with her. Mr. Featherstonhaugh saw one day, a pair of horses, attached to a private carriage, madly dashing through the street, uncontrolled by their driver. The first thought of a young man of his spirit and courage was to stop

the horses and save those inside the carriage from injury and possible death. After he had stopped the terrified horses, he



*Sarah Duane.*

went to the assistance of the occupants of the carriage and his gaze had no sooner fallen upon the beautiful face and dainty person of Sarah Duane, than he lost his heart, and for her mother, the stately Madam Duane, the daughter of Robert Livingston, he conceived the most profound respect and an admiration, which later became mutual. On her part, Miss Duane saw, in the tall, elegant gentleman, whose courage had saved herself and her mother, a man who was worthy of her deepest love.

The rather formal acquaintance resulting from such incidents, in this instance, rapidly ripened into friendship. A few months later, on November 6, 1808, Mr. Featherstonhaugh and Miss Duane were married in St. George's Church, Schenectady, by the Rev. Cyrus Stebbins. Besides being beautiful, nature had given her a brilliant intellect which had been so highly cultivated that she was reputed to be the most accomplished girl of her age in the entire country. At the age of but thirteen, she was wonderfully clever with the paint brush, as may be seen to-day from pictures from her brush at that age—still treasured by the family in the Duanesburg mansion. Especially fine are a water color of West Point, sketched from the opposite side of the Hudson, and an oil, of a hunter in the forest, painted from the imagination. She was also an accomplished musician. Especially was she mistress of the harp. With tastes and accomplishments so similar, it would have been indeed a wonder had they not loved.

In the spring after their marriage, 1809, Mr. Featherstonhaugh began to build a mansion on the thousand acres willed to his wife by Judge Duane, in Duanesburg, which included what

was later called, Featherstonhaugh lake. This residence had a frontage of one hundred and forty feet on the lake and was sixty feet deep. It was in the style of architecture to be found on gentlemen's estates in England, and the acres immediately surrounding the mansion were laid out as a park. The estate was called Featherstonhaugh Park. Mr. Featherstonhaugh was broad and liberal in his ideas and, at the same time, he was intensely English. It was, therefore, but natural that his American home should be, in a general way, as nearly like his English home as was possible.

He then entered upon the most extensive practical and experimental farming operations of any man of his day in the State. Houses were built for his steward, or head farmer, and the farm hands; barns were built for the harvested crops and stables for the horses and other live stock. The live stock was all thoroughbred and imported from England. Although busily occupied with the administration of his estate and the experimental operations of the farm, Mr. Featherstonhaugh took time to begin a correspondence with the best known agriculturalists of the day and with geologists—geology being a subject of which he was fond and upon which he was an authority. His correspondents lived in Great Britain, on the Continent and in the United States; so the interchange of ideas, theories and of actual results was most valuable. In addition, he began his literary work which, later, included many subjects. At this time, he published two volumes of agriculture, based upon the results of his experiments; contributed, in prose and poetry, to the periodicals of the day and, for recreation, translated Dante's *Inferno*.

Respected, and sought after, for his mental attainments by his social and intellectual peers of both Continents; after his marriage with the beautiful and cultivated Sarah Duane, these attractions were increased, and the mansion in Duanesburg became a veritable Mecca for the scientists, authors and statesmen of England and America. Among his most intimate acquaintances and friends were—James Madison, John Quincy Adams, Andrew

Jackson, Daniel Webster, John C. Calhoun, John Jay, Henry Clay, Lafayette, Joseph, King of Spain, and his brother Jerome Bonaparte; Dr. Buckland, dean of Westminster Abbey; Sir Roderick Murcherson, president of the Geological Society, of London, and Sir John Sinclair, of Edinburgh, at that time the greatest authority on agriculture. The most frequent of the visitors at the Duanesburg mansion was Henry Clay.

There is, perhaps, nothing that so strongly emphasizes the overpowering influence of commercialism and the greed for dollars of the present day, as the fact, that while the people of Schenectady boast of the prosperity of the city and are more or less accurately acquainted with the size of the pay-rolls of the General Electric and American Locomotive Companies, they know little or nothing of the men of national prominence who lived and visited in Schenectady. The Yankee is as eager for the dollar as the New Yorker; but, while watching intently for the main chance, he keeps the tail of his eye upon the splendid past. It is not an unusual thing in New England to see a tablet on a house front giving the information that such or such a man was a visitor there, or had passed the night there. It is doubtful if



*Portrait of General George Washington,  
Presented by him to Miss Duane.*

there are fifty Schenectadians who can state, with accuracy, where Washington slept and dined upon the occasions of his three visits to this city. On the contrary, it is stated by a few persons with authority, that Washington was the guest of General William North, with Steuben, Herkimer, Schuyler and others, at his home in Duanesburg; even the room in which he slept is pointed out, but as a matter of fact, Washington did nothing of the kind. He did not go to Duanesburg.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh's acquaintance with George Stephenson, the inventor of the locomotive, had aroused his interest in the possibilities of steam railroads; and the more he thought on the subject, the more was he convinced that railroads were entirely practical and practicable. In 1811, he began to write to friends and acquaintances to obtain their ideas on the subject and, in every instance, his faith in railroads was treated with toleration or ridicule and always without faith. It required more than lack of faith on the parts of others to discourage him. His eyes saw into the future and his brain told him, that to shorten the distances between cities, by reducing the time required in traveling from one to another, would be the quickest road to commercial and consequently to national greatness.

In 1812, he began to write articles on the subject for the periodicals of the day. These being more widely read than his letters, only served to provide amusement for a greater number of doubters, whose wisdom told them that to travel upon rails by means of steam at the rate of from six to ten miles an hour was impossible and the idea, the result of a disordered mind. He was ridiculed and laughed at on the street—behind his back, however—and had he proposed the telephone or wireless telegraphy, people could not have thought him more of a wild dreamer than they did. One Schenectady humorist remarked to some friends on the street, one day, just after Mr. Featherstonhaugh had passed: "Did you ever hear of such a wild idea? Why, a train could not be made to go fast enough between this city and Albany to keep the mosquitoes from eating the passengers." But he persisted in his faith and in his efforts to convince some one that railroads were possible. By persisting, he became the father of the present railroad systems of North America which, in 1904, have 250,000 miles of road; and he, at the same time, gave to Schenectady the honor of being the place in which the subject of railroads was first broached. The railroad between Baltimore and Washington was in operation a few years earlier than was the Mohawk and Hudson, but neither road would have been built

when it was built, had not Mr. Featherstonhaugh been fighting for them for fifteen years, alone, against the cruellest weapon known to mankind—ridicule.

In 1823 he had succeeded in convincing one man—Stephen Van Rensselaer, the last Patroon—and, realizing that the public could not be depended upon, and that some one must take the initiative, on December 26, 1825, he advertised in the Schenectady Cabinet, a notice for application to the Legislature for a railroad charter. This notice was run for six weeks and created great interest and excitement. The charter was granted on March 26, 1826, and the Patroon and Mr. Featherstonhaugh were the only persons named in the charter as directors, and Mr. Featherstonhaugh sailed in the fall with his wife and young son, James, for England, to consult with Stephenson in regard to the motive power for the railroad. They remained abroad for two years, which were spent in traveling all over the Continent and in England.

His work and reputation as a geologist had preceded him. Upon his arrival in London, he was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society of London. Upon their return to America, in 1828, the family went immediately to Duanesburg. A spark from the fire lighted in the great fireplace in the hall, fell upon the roof and the fine old mansion was burnt to the ground. Before they sailed for England in 1826, Mr. Featherstonhaugh's two little daughters had died. This, with the destruction of the home so full of memories connected with them, seemed to crush him. He went to New York to reside and never again saw his Duanesburg estate. The present home of Robert C. Cullings was built upon the wine-cellar of the old Featherstonhaugh mansion.

In the June following the removal to New York—the house was on the lower end of Broadway—Mrs. Featherstonhaugh died. From this time he devoted all his efforts to literature, travel and exploration. He became a member of the Philosophical Society and of the Academy of Natural Science, of Philadelphia and of the Lyceum of Natural History, of New York.



In 1829, he translated the Republic of Cicero and lectured frequently on geology in Philadelphia and New York. In 1831, he established and published the first periodical, on geology, in America, called "The Monthly American Journal of Geology and Natural Sciences", and as the result of his work, he was spoken of in Europe and America as "The Father of American Geology." In 1833, he was appointed, by Congress, the first Government Geologist. The honor of this appointment will be more fully appreciated when it is known that Mr. Featherstonhaugh never became a citizen of the United States, but remained a subject of the King to the day of his death; and it will be shown, later, that his son, James, a citizen of the United States, was appointed by Great Britain to represent that government, as one of the two engineers in the north-east boundary dispute between Canada and the United States, thus emphasizing the confidence of two Nations in the family. Some of the best fossil specimens in the British Museum were obtained by Mr. Featherstonhaugh and given to that institution by him. In this year, 1833, he translated the Italian romance by Manzoni, "*I Promissi Sposi*," famous, at that time.

The following year he began that series of explorations, as Government Geologist—the first ever undertaken by the Government—which resulted in the gathering of most important information regarding the history of the Continent, as read in its rocks. His first journey was to Mexico which he reached on horseback and in canoes. A great deal of this vast territory had never before been visited by white men. The primitive forest was grand; the game and wild animals were plentiful, and adventures frequent. The adventures met with would fill a volume. After his return, he published an official account of his research and discoveries for the government, and he married Charlotte Carter, grand-daughter of "King" Carter—so called on account of his vast possessions—of Shirley Hall on the James river.

In 1835, he made another journey of exploration for the

government on foot, on horseback and in canoes, to the wilderness of the northwest, in Michigan and about the lakes, he being the first white man to penetrate that wild region. He explored toward the west to the Mississippi and went up the Minnay Sotor river—now called St. Peter's river—in canoes. Numerous bands of Indians were encountered. Mr. Featherstonhaugh's great height and commanding presence caused the Indians to give him a friendly reception. After he had explained the purpose of his presence, they gave him every assistance and extended to him their hospitality, which largely consisted in "scalp dances" in which he sometimes took part, for diplomatic reasons. He also attended their councils and remained for some time with them, to learn their language. He returned to civilization, after being absent for a year, published the report of the expedition and started for the Cherokee Nation, in Georgia, and was there for a considerable time, studying the Cherokees, the geological strata and formation and natural history.

These exploring and geological trips were delightful to such a man as Mr. Featherstonhaugh. The weeks and months were filled with adventure and intensely interesting incident, besides great hardships and danger from wild beasts and Indians; so, when he returned to Washington from his sojourn with the Cherokees, he spent the succeeding two years quietly, devoting himself to literature, music and society. At the end of the two years, in 1839, he sailed for England, with his family, with the determination of spending the remainder of his life in his native land; but the British Government determined otherwise.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh arrived in England at the time when the dispute between Great Britain and the United States, over the boundary between Maine and Canada, was the most bitter. His arrival at this time seemed most opportune; for the government immediately called upon him for information in regard to the conditions in the west, because of his knowledge of things American. After consultation with Mr. Featherstonhaugh, the government decided to appoint a commission to adjust the dispute

and settle the boundary; so he was appointed a commissioner by his friend, the Earl of Durham. Richard L. Mudge, a noted astronomer, was the other commissioner. James Duane Featherstonhaugh—the son who was named for his grandfather, the illustrious patriot—a young man of twenty-five and a citizen of the United States, was appointed one of the two engineers of the commission and its secretary, by the British Government; Colonel Broughton, of the Royal Engineers, being the other. Three months were spent in equipping the expedition, and early in 1840, the Commission sailed for Canada. In 1844, Mr. Featherstonhaugh returned to England and made his report and recommendations, with the result, that the United States gained a considerable territory to the northward of the line claimed by Great Britain. The thanks of both houses of Parliament were given to Mr. Featherstonhaugh.

While traveling in the south, Mr. Featherstonhaugh studied closely and impartially, the subject of slavery and the conditions which surrounded it, and made the purchase and sale of human beings possible, only to become disgusted with the whole subject. He wrote a book reflecting on slavery while in the south, in which he made a bitter attack upon slavery, but he refrained for obvious reasons, from publishing it, while in the service of the United States or Great Britain. About ten years later, Harper Brothers published as a political tract, the gist of the book in pamphlet form. He also published two volumes, giving an account of his experiences, adventures and of the Indians among whom he lived on the expedition to the Minnay Sotor. He also published a satirical sketch in 1839, entitled: "Baron Roorback's Tour." This name "Roorback," became a catch-word in the south, to describe persons of the "Roorback" variety.

But even now, Mr. Featherstonhaugh was not permitted to remain in private life. His warm personal friend, Lord Aberdeen, in recognition of his services in America, appointed him to represent Great Britain, as Consul of the Department of the Sein, in France. It was at Havre, France, in his capacity of

Consul, that he experienced the most exciting and romantic of all his adventures. This was nothing less than helping the King of France to escape, from his rebellious people, to England. Soon after going to Havre, he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of London. In 1845, he went to Paris and was presented to the King and Queen. Louis Philippe was delighted with Mr. Featherstonhaugh; both were accomplished linguists and extensive travelers; and as the King had been in the United States, they spent much time in conversation. An invitation to attend the royal ball and supper was received and accepted. A warm friendship existed between the great Anglo-Saxon and the unfortunate French King, which culminated in the saving of the King by his Anglo-Saxon friend, from capture and, possibly, from death.

When Louis Philippe abandoned the throne, in February, 1848, he fled to the coast opposite England, in the hope that he would be able to escape across the channel. The British Government, anticipating this attempt by the King, Lord Palmerston issued orders to all British officials to help him, if it should be possible. Mr. Featherstonhaugh, being more in touch with the King, from his acquaintance with him, received information that he had succeeded in reaching the coast near Honfleur. He sent the Vice-Consul, in a sailing packet, to the place where the King and Queen were in hiding. The Vice-Consul found them in a small house and explained his errand. The King sent a request to Mr. Featherstonhaugh to try to devise a plan for his escape, and promised that he would follow it faithfully. An excuse for sending the packet back in the evening was made. The King and Queen disguised themselves, the King being "Mr. Smith," an uncle of Mr. Featherstonhaugh." Provided with the Consul's passport, they arrived by the packet safely at Havre and were met on the dock by Mr. Featherstonhaugh, who, according to the King's own account of it, asked: "How do you do, Uncle?" to which the King replied: "Very well, George, I thank you."

The "uncle" took his "nephew's" arm, and they pushed their

way through the crowd of gendarmes to board the little British steamer, in command of Captain Paul, who had everything in readiness and steam up, for a hurried departure. As they were descending the gang-plank to the steamer, Madam Mousse, a hanger-on and amateur detective of the Customs House, stared the King in the face and forced an introduction by Mr. Featherstonhaugh, who said: "My uncle, Mr. Smith, Madam Mousse." "Ah," said she, "it appears that the uncle is not much older than the nephew." They then forced their way past the woman and entering the cabin of the steamer, Mr. Featherstonhaugh took the King's hand, and said: "Now, thank God, you are safe." He immediately left the King, and stepped on to the dock, just as the steamer was moving off. Madam Mousse had, in the meantime, called a French officer, who asked: "Who was the person you put on board the steamer?" "My uncle," was the reply. "Ah, Mr. Consul, what have you done, what have you done?" "What would you have done in my place?" asked Mr. Featherstonhaugh. The King reached England safely, and before his death, two years later, sent to his friend and rescuer, the British Consul at Havre, a golden box, studded with diamonds. Mr. Featherstonhaugh was especially invited to attend the funeral of the unfortunate Louis Philippe.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh remained as Consul at Havre up to the day of his death, in September, 1866, at the age of eighty-six. That George W. Featherstonhaugh was intensely English and loved his country, was shown by the architecture of his Duaneburg mansion, the arrangement of the park in which it stood; but more emphatically was his feeling for the "Old Country" shown, while Consul in Havre; for he caused a ship-load of English sod to be brought over, so that, when he walked in his garden he could tread upon his beloved England.

As an author, Mr. Featherstonhaugh was able to combine entertainment with instruction. His two books of travel: "An Excursion in the Slave States" and, "A Canoe Voyage up the Minnay Sotor," are so enlivened by the narration of adventures

and incidents; by anecdotes and humorous description, that they seem more like stories than an actual account of a scientific exploration, by a representative of the United States Government.

Mr. Featherstonhaugh was a man possessed of high attainments and cultivation, who traveled through a new country as a student of men and manners, as well as a geologist. His impartial and true description of the people of the South and Southwest, in slavery days, of their manner of living, their habits, customs and speech, makes "An Excursion in The Slave States" as readable to-day, as it was when first published. The Americans of this generation know even less about America and the Americans, of the time about which he wrote, than they do about Tibet or the Antarctic regions.

There has probably been no English gentleman, who has written upon the subject of America and the Americans, who so fully appreciated the fine qualities of the American men and women of cultivation and refinement, as did Mr. Featherstonhaugh. His standard of American manhood and womanhood was high; for it was based upon his wife, Sarah Duane and her stately mother and upon his friends, the statesmen and scholars of the United States, who, with himself, regarded the mutual friendship as an honor. On the other hand, it is doubtful if there has been any English author, whose subject was America and its people, who was so completely nauseated and disgusted with that vast hord of illiterate, illbred provincials, who polluted the atmosphere with their speech and disgusted the eye with their manners; whose one object in life was an ostentatious display, whose one hope, the accumulation of dollars. But unlike other, later English writers, Mr. Featherstonhaugh did not condemn the whole Nation, because it included barbarians, nor did he ridicule the people—and their institutions—whose hospitality and friendship he had accepted. On the contrary, in all of his books, he gauged his estimate of America from the highest standard and only condemned those who fell below it, because their fall seemed to be wilful and of intention. While his associates were, by choice,

people of his own class, he, at the same time, esteemed and gave his friendship to persons of simple manners and humble positions who lived so close to Nature that they were Nature's noble men and women. The qualities which appealed to him in the humble, were, modesty, cleanliness, thrift and honesty, and he found many such in the humble log-cabins, in the great north and south-west through which he traveled; and it is hardly possible to doubt that his gentle breeding and fine manhood appealed to them with equal strength.

The book on the geological-exploration journey into the north-west and up the Minnaw Sotor river is entirely different from the other, but equally fine and interesting. Mr. Featherstonhaugh's descriptions of the pre-historic (Indian?) mounds and earthen fortifications are particularly interesting to students of the subject of the mound builders. One of the strong points of this book is, that, in describing the Indians, their manner of living and their customs, the author has considered no detail too insignificant to be recorded. Thus, a better idea of how they lived, what they did and of their tribal and family customs, is given to the reader, than would be possible from the generalizations of many other writers upon little known people and lands. Two striking predictions made by Mr. Featherstonhaugh, more than half a century ago, have been fulfilled in a most striking manner. One was in regard to Pittsburg: "Pittsburg will, in time, be the great manufacturing place of America. Here will be sent the iron smelted from the furnaces that will soon be erected all over this region of coal and iron; \* \* \* \* will soon make it the Birmingham of America." The other was, that the territory lying to the west from the great lakes, would become the great granary of the United States. It must be remembered, that when the prediction was made, the country was in its primitive wilderness. This prediction was based upon the knowledge he had acquired as an experimental and practical agriculturist and upon his faith in the ability of the American people to see, and then grasp opportunity.

## JAMES DUANE FEATHERSTONHAUGH.

James Duane Featherstonhaugh was born on the Duanesburg estate in 1815 and spent the first eleven years of his life there, romping in the fields and woods, fishing in the lake and preparing with a tutor for college. His love for travel, inherited from his father, was indulged in his twelfth year, when in 1826, his father sailed for England to consult George Stephenson in

the interests of the Mohawk & Hudson Railroad. Two years were spent on the continent by his parents, young James in the meantime attending school in Yorkshire. After the return to America, in 1828, the home in Duanesburg having burnt down, the family lived in New York and he continued his education and prepared for college at Hyde Park. He took his entrance examinations for Union College in 1830 and was graduated with the class of '34, at



*James Duane Featherstonhaugh.*

the age of nineteen. The three years after graduation were spent in railroad construction.

In 1837, he sailed, alone, to England for the purpose of seeing the coronation of Britain's best and most enlightened ruler, Queen Victoria. He remained in England but a short time and, returning to New York, he continued to reside there till his father determined to return to England to live there permanently. It was at this time, 1839, that father and son were appointed, respectively, by the British Government, a commissioner and an engineer of the north-east boundary dispute. The wilderness of Maine and the adjoining territory of Canada was grand with its



first-growth pine, of great height and circumference, its great oaks and other hard woods and its splendid cedars. The woods in those days were not like the woods we know anything about, with a thick tangle of undergrowth and saplings. The ground was free from all small vegetation that impedes the way and the sight. The natural condition was like what we call a grove, in these days, so the view was unobstructed, save by the great stems of the giant trees of the primitive forest. The beautiful lakes



*One of the Fireplaces in the Featherstonhaugh Mansion.  
On the marble slab across the opening is a remarkable outline of the profile of the father of the present owner.*

and rivers, so clear that the white sandy beds could be seen many feet below the surface, were generously supplied with great lake-trout and the speckled beauties of great size, and the forests and swamps with game and fierce animals, especially the small and fearless lynx. All this, the closeness to Nature and the interest of his work, appealed to him as the journeys for exploration had, in the years past, to his father.

During the four years he was in the wilderness, he experienced hardships, privation, adventures and one of the most horrible experiences imaginable. Late one autumn, all the men of the surveying party, except Mr. Featherstonhaugh and a French-Canadian, left the camp to go up the St. John's river for the winter's supplies, expecting to return in a few weeks, but a great snow storm prevented it and shut Mr. Featherstonhaugh off from the world for four months. One day, after the great fall of snow, the "Canuck" heard or saw a moose not far from the log house. He started out to shoot it, if possible, for its meat, as they were short of provisions, and for its hide. As the man had not returned to camp at dusk, Mr. Featherstonhaugh went in search of him. After several hours spent without finding the man, he returned to camp for rest and food. In the morning, he renewed the search and found his man not far from the camp lying close to the body of the dead moose between its fore and hind legs. The Canadian was in a shocking condition. His feet, legs, hands and arms, being unprotected from the intense cold, were frozen. The man was carried to the log house and lived in this awful condition for ten days. After his death, Mr. Featherstonhaugh suspended the body by a rope from the ridgepole of the cabin, where it froze stiff and swayed gently for four months, in the wind, which forced its way between the logs. It is difficult to even imagine what it must have been to be forced to sleep and eat in the presence of the swaying corpse; to go out into the dazzling depths of snow and the sun to hunt for food, only to return to the awesome presence of his dead companion. At last, late in the winter, the absent members of the party returned to the cabin on snowshoes and soon after, they and Mr. Featherstonhaugh, left the woods and he returned to civilization and his friends.

In 1844, his marriage with Miss Emily Chapman, daughter of General Sidney F. Chapman, of Virginia, took place in Washington, D. C. President Tyler was a guest at the wedding and charming Dolly Madison stood by the side of the bride, during

the ceremony. After a year spent in Washington, Mr. and Mrs. Featherstonhaugh sailed for France to reside in Havre where Mr. Featherstonhaugh's father, George W. Featherstonhaugh, was British Consul. Mr. Featherstonhaugh was present on the night his father helped the King of France to escape to England. He and his wife resided in Havre till 1852, when they crossed the channel to England and lived in the suburb of Great Ealing, till 1855, when they returned to America, where Mr. Featherstonhaugh's presence was necessary to take charge of the Duanesburg



*Featherstonhaugh Mansion, Duanesburg, Built in 1812.*

property and mansion left to him by his aunt. They resided in the Duanesburg mansion, built by Miss Catherine Livingston Duane in 1812, till 1866, when the family moved to Schenectady, only spending the summer months in Duanesburg. Mr. Featherstonhaugh died in 1899.

Mr. James Duane Featherstonhaugh's gentle birth and cultivated mind caused him to treat all persons, irrespective of position

or condition, with friendly courtesy. The Indians among whom he lived for the greater part of four years in the Maine forest and across the border in Canada, had the same feelings of confidence and esteem for him, in their primitive savage refinement, as did his social and intellectual equals at home and abroad. Whether in the log cabin of the Maine forests or the hospitable home of Park and Nellie Custis, where he was a frequent and welcome visitor, he was the same—faithful to all his inherited instincts.



*Colonial Furniture in Delancey H'atkins' House.*

## Chapter XIII.

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### GENERAL WILLIAM NORTH.



ABOUT one-third of mile east of the Featherstonhaugh mansion in Duaneburg, is the old North house, built by General William North in 1784, when the wilderness was vast and grand and the wolves were fierce and numerous and so bold, that they howled about the house at night, while it was being built.

There is nothing of the mansion about the North house, but it is a fine specimen of the old-time New England home, such as are to be found in the coast-towns of Massachusetts and Maine. This North house is forty-five feet square, with large rooms and lofty ceilings. The basement was finished off for the kitchen, pantries and the apartments for the house-slaves. The side of the basement, fronting the south, was open; while, at the back and ends, were the usual mason work against the excavation, the south side, being on the brow of a knoll, was fitted with doors and windows. That portion of the basement, not used for kitchen and living quarters, was divided into store-rooms for provisions, vegetables and the famous North wine-cellar.

General North and his frequent visitors, Baron Steuben, Generals Popham, Schnyler and other famous men, were portwiners of the three-bottle variety. They drank long and deep and played for high stakes, but their drinking and their gaming were the drinking and gaming of gentlemen of the old school. If the negro butler put them all to bed, after a jolly night, in the small hours, the white butler was doing the same thing for the same class of hard drinking, great-hearted gentlemen, in the old country.

William North, a young gentleman of cultivation, fine

presence and ardent patriotism, was born in 1755, in Maine, and entered the Continental army at the early age of nineteen and was assigned to service in New York. His military duties brought him in frequent contact with Baron Steuben, who was so greatly pleased with young North that, young as he was, Steuben appointed him an aide on his staff. North did his duty as a soldier, well and faithfully and, although not particularly conspicuous for any one act, was worthy of the confidence and esteem of Washington, Steuben, Herkimer and Schuyler. That other patriot and statesman, Judge Duane, regarded young North so highly that he gave him his eldest daughter, Mary, in marriage. As in the case of his other son-in-law, George W. Featherstonhaugh, Judge Duane gave General North's wife an estate of one thousand acres in Duaneburg.

It has been said that General North found the estate covered by a forest of magnificent trees of pine and hard woods. He attacked Nature with the same vim with which he had attacked



*General William North's Duaneburg Home, Built in 1784.*

the British and finally succeeded in making a very fine place of it. The timber for the frame of the house and the pine and beautiful curly maple for the interior finish, were cut on the place. The daylight noises of hammer and saw were succeeded at night by the howls of the hungry wolves, till the house was finished, when the men had time to devote to hunting.

The main entrance is through a vestibule; thence, directly into the living room, twenty-two feet square. Opposite the door, is the great chimney with its open fireplace. Back of this room, on the opposite side of the great chimney, is a cosy dining room with a fireplace and a trapdoor, leading down to the well-stocked wine-cellar. A hall separates the dining room from a large room which General North, with his Yankee birth and training, probably called "the best room," or possibly, "a chamber." At the front and adjoining the living room, is the library. The library is provided with a bookcase, extending across one side of the room and reaching nearly to the ceiling. It is made of beautiful curly maple, which has grown dark with age. Upstairs, over the dining-room was the school-room, and across the hall, the bed-room where Baron Steuben passed many a night, dreaming of port and sherry and cognac, to be assimilated on some future occasion.

On the panes of the windows in the living room are to be seen, to-day, some initials made with diamonds, by General North's famous guests. The most interesting of them all are those of Hannah North, the general's daughter, who, it may be imagined, in her girlish pride in the possession of her first diamond, tried its hardness upon the window-pane, by scratching her name thereon. A sample of the quality of material of those days is to be found in the paper on the walls of the living-room. It has a whitish background; the pattern, in light brown, representing minerets and cathedral-like arches. This paper is in as good condition as it was when General North occupied the house.

The house stands on the eastern end of one of those "hog-backs" or elongated knolls with which the Duaneburg hills are

topped, as described in the chapter on Judge Duane. The land falls away at the sides, and in the rear gradually. And on the east or front, is a considerable level. South of the house, some six hundred feet, is a little valley half a mile long, and of irregular width, averaging, perhaps, an eighth of a mile. Through this, in the old days, ran a vigorous little brook which left the valley at the western end, through a narrow gorge six feet wide. Across this General North placed a dam, thus forming a charming lake half a mile long, with winding shores, heavily timbered on the south and cleared fields and the grounds immediately surrounding the house, on the north. The lake was particularly beautiful and added greatly to the charm of the scenery. Thirty or forty years ago the dam was destroyed and the water allowed to run off, because the bottom of the lake was so valuable for farming purposes—the rich, black loam being very fertile. Even the brook loses itself, save in wet weather, for the cutting off of the forest has caused many of the bubbling springs of those old days to dry up. Thus, many lovely spots as well as characters, have been changed into ugliness for the sake of the almighty dollar.

A road and stone walk connected the North home with the present Featherstonhaugh mansion—built by Miss Catherine Livingston Duane, in 1812—a third of a mile distant from the North house. This must not be confused with the original mansion, built by George W. Featherstonhaugh, on the shore of Featherstonhaugh lake; but it is the mansion in which his son James Duane Featherstonhaugh lived and in which his grandson, the present George W. Featherstonhaugh, and his family, spend the summer months—the house shown in the picture.

For some reason, not known, the granddaughters of General North, Miss Hannah North and Mrs. Weston, the wife of the Rev. Daniel Cody Weston, an Episcopal clergyman, sold the Duanesburg home and built a house in Newport, Rhode Island. The knocker and one of the mantle-pieces of the Duanesburg home were sent to Newport to be used in that house and unless they were removed when Miss North sold the Newport property, they are still there.



In recognition of his services and ability, William North was appointed by Washington, in 1798, inspector-general of the United States armies. General North served from the breaking out of the war till the close at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, on which important occasion he was present. In civil life, he was perhaps even more prominent than in military life. He was one of the first Erie canal commissioners; was three times speaker of the Assembly and United States Senator. General North died in 1836.

The beautiful specimens of Indian skill in chipping stone, the arrow and spear heads shown in the picture, were found on the ground which was covered by the artificial lake, by Mr. Ennnett McQuade, of New York city, a son of the present owner of the North property. Besides the symmetry and fine workmanship of the relics, there is the additional interest due to the fact that they were found on the top of a hill of eight hundred feet elevation, three or four miles from the Norman's Kill and twelve miles from the Mohawk river. It was generally supposed that the Indians did not live on the highlands nor far from a river or lake; but there are evidences, on the North place, of a small Indian encampment, possibly of three or four families.



*Indian Spear Heads, found on Gen'l North's Place.*



*Judge McQueen's Home, State Street. Present Location Union Hall Block.*

## Chapter XIV.

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### TOLL.



THE admirable historians of Schenectady County as Pearson, his editor, Major McMurray and the Hon. John Sanders, state that Karel Haensen Toll, the first American ancestor of the Toll family, was born in Sweden; but his great-grandson arrives at the conclusion, after long and careful investigation, that the family is of Norwegian extraction. This opinion is strongly sustained by the spelling of the second name, Haensen, the ending, "sen" being a typical Norwegian ending; the Swedish ending of the same name would be, "son."

This great-grandson, Dr. D. J. Toll, in 1847, wrote a fifty-page pamphlet, in his old age, giving anecdotes and reminiscences of the family and of two or three other old families, based upon tradition which he obtained by word of mouth, from old men who were born in the middle of the eighteenth century and which they obtained from their fathers and grandfathers, who were living before and immediately after the massacre. In other words; there were, at the most, but two lives between Dr. Toll and the days of the settlement of Schenectady. This is obtaining the traditional history of the end of the seventeenth and all of the eighteenth centuries, in the most direct manner, possible.

That Karel Haensen Toll came to Schenectady at all—or, at least, when he did come—was, largely, a matter of chance. That he was a seafaring man is probable; for, previous to 1680, he was captured by the Spanish, off the Spanish Main—as the north coast of South America and the neighboring islands were called—and imprisoned with a companion, probably in the fortress of Porto Cabello. After close confinement for several days, Toll and his companion were given the liberty of the prison-yard, during

daylight, but were required to be in their cell at sunset, at which time the keeper visited all the cells to look through the peek-hole of the doors to see that the prisoners were in their cots; and then, to lock doors.

While walking about the yard, they, one day, saw a strange ship standing in for the harbor. It remained a day or two and then beat out to sea, only to return a few days later. This was repeated several times. It gave the captives an idea for escaping. It was an idea requiring courage and determination, qualities which Karel Haensen Toll showed that he possessed, in a high degree, in after years, as a pioneer in Schenectady.

Toll and his companion made their plans and one day, they arranged their cots in the cell, to give them the appearance of being occupied. When the keeper made his rounds and glanced through the peek-hole, he thought that he saw the two prisoners, asleep in their cots. They, in fact, were hiding under the shadow of the outer-wall of the fortress. As soon as it was dark enough, they climbed the wall and made for the seashore, where they made a solemn agreement to stick by one another and swim to the ship, or die in the attempt. The sea was shallow for a considerable distance from land and was clogged with a sea-weed having sharp edges, which cut and scratched their bodies painfully, and the salt-water greatly added to their distress. Toll's companion suffered so greatly that he decided to return to captivity, rather than endure the agony longer. They bade each other good-bye and Toll continued his flight for liberty.

He soon left the sea-weed and striking deep water, began a swim which lasted far into the night, till suddenly his ears were gladdened by the sound of a cock crowing, and then he saw the flash of a lantern. Looking up, he saw the ship, hailed it and, after giving an account of himself, was taken on board. The crew provided him with clothing and in the morning he told his story to the captain, who assured him that he would not be given up to the Spanish, so long as there was powder and shot on the ship. A little later in the day, some officers from the fort came off to

the ship in a boat, but the captain denied all knowledge of the escaped prisoner. Toll remained in the ship, which touched at the Island of Curacoa, and arrived in New York City about 1680. The fact that the last port touched, before arriving at New York, was Curacoa, no doubt occasioned the belief that Toll came from that Island, directly to Schenectady, as Pearson and Sanders, in their histories, say that he did.

The Indians had a custom of giving names to other Indians and to white men, which described some particular event or characteristic. Mr. Toll's Indian name was Kingegom or fish, his long swim for freedom being something which appealed strongly to the Indians' love of courage and endurance.

At the time of his arrival in New York, Karel was, probably, about twenty-five years old. Whether he remained in New York for a year or two, or proceeded directly to Albany, is not known; but that he married Lysbet, a daughter of Daniel Rickhout, of Albany, is shown by the records of that city. Lysbet, by the way, is in English, Elizabeth and Karel Haensen is Charles Henry. They had three sons and five daughters, the first-born was a daughter, Neeltje, who was born on June 20, 1686. At the time of his marriage, he was living—and perhaps had been living for two or three years—in Schenectady.

Karel Haensen Toll arrived in Schenectady with no other capital than a sound body and mind; a great deal of that "stuff" which made the old Norsemen, from whom he was descended, invincible; and as great a determination to succeed as he had when he swam, all night, with the agony of salt-water in the cuts and scratches with which his body was covered. At twenty-five, these qualities were his only possessions; in his old age, he measured his possessions by the square mile. He developed a will, which made him masterful and an individuality so great, that it verged upon eccentricity. That he fulfilled the rather stiff requirements of the early Dutch Protestants, and was accepted into full communion in the venerable First Dutch Church in 1694, is shown by the church-records.

Karel first settled on the north side of the Mohawk river, eight miles west of Schenectady, near what is now Hoffman's ferry. His first dwelling was what, in the early cattle-ranch days of the west, was called a "dug-out." A rectangular excavation was made in a hill-side; the front was inclosed with logs and the roof was made of poles and bark. Here, Karel and his wife lived and toiled; he, in the fields; she, at the spinning-wheel and the oven. Economy, thrift and profitable trade with the Indians—too far in the wilderness to be interfered with by the greedy Albany authorities—started Mr. and Mrs. Toll on the highway to wealth. The tiny wages paid by the men for whom he worked, by the day, were carefully saved. That the wives of those days were, in truth, help-mates and capable of great physical exertion, was shown by the fact, that when flour was needed, Mrs. Toll would walk the eight miles from her home to Schenectady and back, carrying three pecks of the flour on her shoulder. This flour would be made into cakes, sweetened with maple-sugar and "swapped" with the sweet-toothed Indians, for pelts; which, in turn, would be sold at great profit, to be sent abroad to Holland, where the tanning of skins for furs had reached a degree of skill not possible in any other country of Europe, at that time. Besides being a source of profit to Mrs. Toll, the Indians were a great nuisance; for they would not only hang around, while the baking was in progress, begging for food, but they had no idea of the fine old British axiom that a man's—or woman's—house was his castle. While the Indians were proud and ceremonious, among themselves, they did not hesitate to beg from the whites, nor to make themselves at home, all over the house, and the settlers were obliged to put up with the annoyance for fear of the treachery and revengful spirit of the noble (?) Redmen. There is no reason to doubt that the Indians were dignified, courteous, in a savage way, and possibly noble, before the "Dutch Courage" of the white man and the white man's cupidity had demoralized them. It is equally doubtful if they were ever anything but dirty; and there is absolutely no doubt, that after they came in

contact with the white settlers in the Dutch Colony, they became drunken beggars, and even more dirty. As every rule has its exceptions, so there were exceptions to this rule; there were rare cases of "Noble Redmen;" but they were nearly all, to be found in New England, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and the South.

With such physical strength, such energy and courage, as were displayed by Elizabeth Toll, there is nothing to wonder at that she and her husband accumulated wealth and vast land possessions. It was no little undertaking to walk the eight miles to the village, for flour, and then to return with three pecks of it, in a sack on her shoulder; and besides, the journey was not without its dangers; for wild animals were in the forest and even wolves were numerous a hundred years later, in some parts of Schenectady County. So, while Karel and Elizabeth Toll labored and saved for those who would come after them, they were also accumulating qualities and character which would descend, as an inheritance, with their lands and houses, to their posterity.

In 1712, Karel purchased, from the Clements, the property known as "Maalwyck," which, with his other possessions, gave him the ownership of nearly seven miles of valuable flats along the north bank of the Mohawk river. This "Maalwyck" farm, still sometimes called by that name, but more generally known as "The Toll Place," is about a mile from the Sanders mansion, on the river-road to Hoffman's Ferry.

The purchase of this property began a new state of affairs for Mr. and Mrs. Toll. They abandoned their first humble home and moved to "Maalwyck," where Mr. Toll began the erection of a more suitable home. This house was located a little to the west of the present brick-house, shown in the picture. This new home was forty by twenty-five feet. It was built of brick, probably made near the site of the house, one story high and topped with the high, steep Dutch roof, in which was another story and above that, a low, large attic. The usual weather-vane was lacking on this house, perhaps because Karel could tell which way the wind was blowing, without depending upon a vane, for information—



*Present Buildings on the Maalwuyck Farm.*



he being a married man. The early Dutch settlers were noted for weather-wisdom; and it was said that this wisdom was derived from gazing for so many hours at the vanes. "So wise did they become, in the matter of the weather, that an experienced old Dutchman could, almost always, tell when it rained, if he was given a fair chance," says Dr. Toll.

The house being built on a slope toward the southwest, had a basement-kitchen, facing that point of the compass and behind it, was the cellar for vegetables and other solid and liquid nourishment. On the first floor were two great rooms; one was the kitchen-living room and the other, the best room, used only on



*Chamber in the Toll House, showing Eighteenth Century Furniture and Draperies.*

especial occasions, such as marriages, funerals and visits of the pastor. Great timbers crossed the ceiling which were planed smooth, with an occasional deeper cut of the ax-blade showing; and the ceiling, also the floor of the second story, was of heavy planks, nearly a foot and a half wide, with the under, or ceiling-side, also planed smooth and rubbed to almost a polish. The

finest specimen of this heavy-timbered ceiling, now to be found in the county, is in the old Abraham Glen house, on Mohawk avenue, Scotia, now the residence of Mr. James Collins, and in the ruins of the DeGraff house, near Hardin's crossing, where the settlers barricaded themselves in the Beukendaal Indian fight. There are many other houses with the great timbers, but the undersides have been ceiled up, thus hiding a most impressive feature of old-time architecture. The nice, fine work, done by the old-time carpenters, in mortising and dovetailing the joints of these great timbers with the even larger upright timbers, would be beyond the skill of the building-carpenters of to-day.

The great fireplace in the Maalwyck house, was two feet deep and eight feet wide, so that a four-foot log would rest upon the great hand-wrought andirons. The mantel, six feet above the hearth, was ornamented with hand-made fluting and moulding and on the shelf, were numerous china bowls. The windows, two by five feet, were swung on hinges, like a door, and the tiny panes of glass were held in place with sheet-lead, as is the glass



*Franklin Stove and Huge Platter in the Dining Room of the Toll House.*

in stained windows. The "Maalwyck" house was, next to the Sanders mansion, the largest in Schenectady, at the time it was built.

The possession of wealth did not change Karel Haensen Toll; he was, in all respects the same man as when he began in a small and humble manner; but it did give him the time to devote more of his great energy to the affairs of the Colony. He was elected one of the three representatives to the Colonial Legislature from Albany County in 1714—of which Schenectady was then a part—and he continued in the Legislature till 1726.

His great-grandson, Dr. Daniel Toll, relates an anecdote, in his little pamphlet, illustrative of the old gentleman's sporting-blood and humor.

It was on his first journey to New York to attend the Legislature, that he met an acquaintance on one of the sloops, which made the trip to New York and back to Albany, by way of the Hudson, as regularly as wind and tide would permit. Mr. Toll was wearing a decidedly old traveling-coat. His acquaintance remarked, in a joking way, upon its appearance, and asked if he intended to wear the coat in the presence of the Governor. Mr. Toll saw no reason why he should not do so, as he "was confident that the coat was well-lined;" whereupon his acquaintance bet a certain sum that he would not have the nerve to do so. This aroused Mr. Toll's sporting-blood; so he said, in the language of the day, "I'll take you." Arriving in New York a few days before the opening of the Legislature, Mr. Toll called upon the Governor, without changing his old traveling-coat for one better. After the Governor had greeted him, he remarked to Mr. Toll: "Your coat seems rather threadbare;" to which Mr. Toll replied: "Yes, your Excellency, but there is a very good lining under it." He then explained to the Governor that the wearing of the coat was not the result of disrespect for himself, but of a wager; and, turning to the acquaintance who was also present, he demanded the payment of the wager. The Governor was much

amused by the incident and before the Legislature adjourned, he found that the man who lined the threadbare coat was, indeed, a very good one.

Dr. Toll relates an incident which well illustrates his great-grandfather's shrewdness and the difficult task of "doing" him; and, at the same time, his generous spirit, when he had obtained the better of the man who hoped to "do" him.

A man by the name of Brazee, who kept a small tavern, met Mr. Toll one day, in Schenectady, and hoping to impose upon the generosity of a rich man, told Mr. Toll a tale of woe, in regard to his poverty and his need of a milch-cow; ending with the statement that he did not know where he could get a cow, nor how he would be able to pay for it. Mr. Toll told Brazee not to let that worry him for he would see to it that he got a cow and that he would put him in the way of easily paying for it. Brazee was delighted with his success, for it was like getting money from home.

In a few days, Brazee went to "Maalwyck" and Mr. Toll showed him the cows, mentioning the prices for which he would sell each one. Brazee picked out a fine cow and started for home with it. Mr. Toll too started for Schenectady, and when he reached the village, he obtained a writ and a judgment against Brazee. Brazee was not as breezy as when he started with the cow for home. He whined and referred to his poverty and told Mr. Toll that he expected to be put in the way of easily paying for the cow. Mr. Toll replied that making the payment easy, was exactly what he was doing. Having got the better of Brazee, by making him pay for the cow, and having established the fact that he was not as easily worked, as the cow was paid for, he wished, indirectly, to return the money to Brazee; so he went to his tavern, invited the villagers to come in and be his guests. He then ordered food and drink, till the cost of his hospitality was considerably larger than the cost of the cow.

The vast fertile river-flats and the pasture-land, on the highest and oldest of the old river-terraces, became the property

of his son, Captain Daniel Toll, after the death of Karel Haensen Toll. In addition to the lands previously mentioned, Karel Toll had purchased a considerable property, then called, and still known, as Benkendaal—or Beech-dale—where, in the ravine—which, on account of its numerous great beech-trees, gave the property its name—he was later to be killed by French Indians. Not French and Indians, as some writers have made it appear, but French Indians, that is, Indians of the French possessions in Canada.

This property is charmingly located at the foot of the Glenville hills, near Hardin's crossing, facing south-west. The house was situated on the brow of a miniature bluff. In front is fertile fiat-land, eight hundred feet wide: it is, in fact, a little valley, running east and west for two or three miles. A little stream flows through the door-yard just to the east of the house—in those days it was a vigorous stream; but now, in the dry season, thanks to the cutting off of the timber, it almost disappears.



*Ravine on Toll Place.*

This stream enters a picturesque gorge, half a mile above the house, and is frequently broken up into cascades and tumbling, rushing rapids. It was on this stream, on the high bank at the left of the picture, on the preceding page, that the last permanent camp of the Mohawks was situated. A few of the great pines and oaks of a hundred years ago, are still standing and give one a faint idea of the beauty of the old forest, with the tumbling stream, when Captain Daniel Toll chose Benkendaal for his home. Captain Toll was born in July, 1691, and in September, 1717, he married Gritje, a daughter of Samuel Arentse Bradt, son of the original settler of that name, and immediately began to build the large stone house upon the site described. All that is left of this fine old home are two doors and their jambs, one bearing the initials and numerals: "D T. 1717," on the lintel.

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*The Toll House.*

This stone house resembled the English, more than the Dutch style of architecture. It was divided in two by a wide hall, passing through the house from front to back, and had Dutch half-doors at either entrance. Being on the brow of the bluff, there was a basement, containing the kitchen, store-rooms and

several living-rooms, as well finished as were the rooms above, which were large, homelike and comfortable. In this house, Captain Daniel and his young wife lived happily and industriously and became the parents of seven children—all of whom died before 1756. One of the daughters married the famous Dutch pastor, the Rev. Cornelius Van Santvoord. Captain Daniel's wife died in 1743 and he and his family moved to the second home of the Toll family, at Maalwyck. This was no doubt chiefly decided upon as being nearer the settlement and safe—the French and Indian War beginning in that year. Four years later, in July, 1748, at the close of the war, Captain Daniel Toll was the first victim of the Beukendaal fight, described in another chapter. He left a large estate and an enviable reputation, as an inheritance to his son, Johannes Toll, whose life was very short. Johannes was born in August, 1719, in the Beukendaal home. At the age of twenty-three, he married Eve Van Patten, and in December, 1746, when but twenty-seven years old, he died, survived by his wife, and but one child, Karel Haensen, an infant, of ten months.

This second Karel became prominent in the community and, at the youthful age of seventeen, he, as a freeholder, in 1763, signed the petition for the charter granted by Governor Dongan; that charter which was the foundation of the ninety years of law suits, brought by the two Ryer Schermerhorns, grandfather and grandson.

This second Karel Haensen in January, 1768, married a daughter of Philip Ryley, of Albany, brother of James Van Slyck Riley, who was postmaster and associate judge of the Court of Common Pleas of Schenectady and was frequently in the service of the Government, as Indian Commissioner and interpreter, to negotiate treaties with the Indians of the far north-west. He was sheriff of Schenectady County, for many years.

Karel Toll and his young wife, immediately after their marriage, went to live in the fine old stone house on the Beuken-

daal property, where they kept open house and were famous for their hospitality during their long married life of sixty-four years. Mr. Toll was possessed of the family energy and of high principles. Like his name-sake, he was a man of unchanging



*Philip Ryley Silver Tea Set in the Toll House.*

determination; once his loyalty was given, it remained steadfast as a matter of principle. This quality was shown in the days of the Revolution. His sympathies were with the rebels, but his loyalty to his king, he believed, prevented his taking an active part on the side of the colonists. So, while he felt that to take up arms against the king would be treason, he believed that it was his duty to give his sympathy and what aid he conscientiously could to his rebelling fellow-countrymen. It required a man of unusual personal magnetism and of undoubted honesty of purpose to retain the confidence and respect of his Tory friends and rebel countrymen; but this he did and he died at the great age of eighty-six years, respected and regretted.

His admirable wife, Elizabeth Ryley Toll, was a noble woman; her charity and charities made her name blessed among the people. The following incident illustrates her goodness and, at the same time, her high spirit—tempered with gentleness—when she felt she had been ill-treated. One autumn, a family was driving to settle in the far-west. A heavy snow-storm overtook



them, and when they had gone as far on their way as the Benkendaal place, the storm was so severe that they could go no further. The doors of Benkendaal were open to them and in the morning, it was seen that it would be impossible for them to continue their journey. The house was well-filled by the family; but Mrs. Toll insisted upon their remaining till the weather and track through the forest were such that they could continue. Mrs. Toll gave them possession of the basement-apartments and their horses were well cared-for in the stables. All this was without remuneration of any kind. The family remained through the autumn and winter and in the spring, when the conditions for journeying became favorable, they started. The great covered wagon was drawn up in front of the house. One after another, they mounted the wagon, with never a word of appreciation or of thanks for the generous old-time hospitality they had received. As they were about to start, Mrs. Toll's sense of justice and her righteous indignation found vent in the biting but gentle sarcasm of: "Good bye, I thank you for the good you have let me do you."

Although the French and Indian war was twenty years back, in history, when Karel Toll and his wife went to live at Benkendaal, there was still intense dread of Indians; and especially fearsome were they to the women, who were generally left alone in the house, while their husbands were in the fields or attending to other business. There was a well near the house in which Mrs. Toll frequently hid, when alone and when Indians were about; and, on many occasions, she and her little ones hid in the great hay-loft of the barn, while the Indians were prowling about below. The well was often shown to her grandchildren by Mrs. Toll, when she told them stories of the occasions upon which she had got into it, to hide and it was regarded by them with awe.

Karel Haensen and Elizabeth Ryley Toll were fully aware of the necessity for and the advantages of a good education; so they gave it to their children. Their sons, John C. and Philip, were both college graduates—the former entering the ministry

and the latter, the practice of medicine. Philip, however, became smitten with the "Star of Empire," so deeply, that he abandoned his profession to follow it, in its westward course and to become a pioneer of the far-west—his wife, of course, going with him. Mrs. Toll was a daughter of Judge Isaac DeGraaf, who was also a major in the Revolutionary War. It was Judge Toll's son and her brother, who provided the means for fitting out Commodore McDonough's fleet, in the war of 1812. In fact, Mr. Toll, her husband, was also an officer in the War of 1812, he being captain of a company of mounted artillery. Captain Toll's company was selected by General Wade Hampton, for headquarters guard, on account of its military excellence and its fine appearance. Isaac DeGraaf Toll, a son of Philip Ryley and Nancey DeGraaf Toll, was a brilliant and distinguished general in the Mexican War. He is still living, at a great age, in the west.

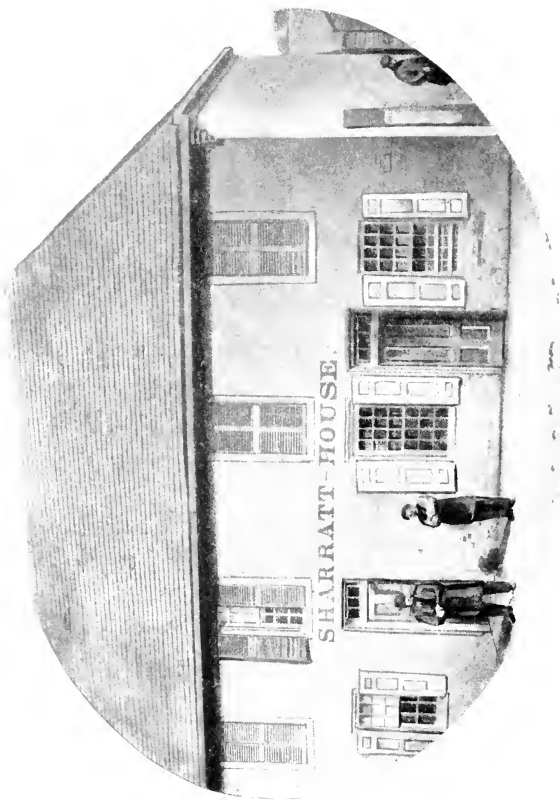
The Rev. John C. Toll, the elder son of the second Karel Haensen Toll, inherited the Beukendaal property. He studied for the church, under the Rev. Dr. Solomon Froeleigh, of Hackensack, and was ordained a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church, on January 31, 1802 and, the following year, was called to the pastorate of the Dutch Churches of Westerlo and Middletown, where he and his wife, Nancy, daughter of Barent Mynderse, of Guilderland, lived on the farm that he had purchased, till 1822. They resided there for nineteen happy years, surrounded by their friends and their books and cultivating the farm successfully—an ability, inherited from his forefathers, by Mr. Toll. In 1822, the failing health of his father, the second Karel, caused him to resign and return to Beukendaal, where his presence was needed. On account of failing health—the result of a college-illness, Rev. Mr. Toll decided to not preach again, regularly. He preached in both English and Dutch.

At Beukendaal, the Reverend and Mrs. Toll passed a

pleasant, happy life; happy in their home and their children; he, finding congenial companionship among the professors of Union College and the pastors of Schenectady. He died in 1849 and his wife, in 1859. Their son, Philip Ryley Toll, the second of the name—he being named for his uncle the physician who went west—inherited Beukendaal, which is still owned by the family, making one hundred and eighty-seven years that it has been in the family.



*Washington Platter in Toll House.*



*Present Location Myer's Block.*

## Chapter XV.

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### SCHERMERHORN.



At a time so remote that the "Ancient City" of Schenectady seems a mere infant in comparison, the village of Schermerhorn, whence came the Schermerhorns of Schenectady County, existed and flourished and had its traditions.

Schermerhorn is located in the Province of North Holland and lies between the dry beds of two lakes called, "Beemter" and "Schermer." These lakes were pumped dry in the seventeenth century, probably for agricultural purposes. Before this was done, the chief occupation of the people of the village was fishing in these extensive lakes. Now the population is agricultural.

Soon after the advent of the year 1400, the people of Schermerhorn and those of a village across the lakes, were frequently involved in disputes of a serious nature. Finally, when the difficulties seemed to be amicably settled, the people of Schermerhorn were displeased over the interpretation of the agreement between the two villages. They were never satisfied with the rights they had obtained and were continually "burrowing" in to the matter in the hope of finding a flaw or, by digging in to the subject more deeply, to find a way out of what they believed to be injustice to them. This habit gave them the nickname of "The Burrowers," a designation of which the people were proud, for it showed their unwillingness to be treated with injustice, as well as their persistence and determination. To perpetuate the memory of this quality, they chose for their emblem a mole, that little animal being the greatest of "burrowers." This emblem was well known early in the fifteenth century, but it was not

recognized as the coat-of-arms of Schermerhorn, by the High Council of the Nobility, till October, 1817. This High Council is a body appointed by the Crown to keep the records of the nobility of Holland and to authorize and register coats-of-arms of municipalities and of families.

The chief object of interest in the modern village of Schermerhorn, is the beautiful Dutch Reformed Church that was built in 1634. It is of pure Gothic architecture and has very fine stained glass windows. The church was renovated in 1894, one of the largest contributors to the fund for that purpose being Mr. William Schermerhorn, of New York city. There is a tablet set into the wall of the church when it was built, which shows the mole as the coat-of-arms of Schermerhorn. This shows a shield with a mole, sable, on a natural color, probably green.

The Schermerhorn family is not only one of the oldest in Schenectady, but in the State. Jacob Janse Schermerhorn, the



*Silver Mounted Pistol in the Schermerhorn Mansion.*

first American ancestor, came while still a young man, to the Dutch possessions in the New World from Waterland, Holland, where

he was born in 1622. He settled in Beverwyck, now Albany County, and started in almost immediately as a money maker, his occupation being that of brewer and Indian trader.

His business ability and great prosperity apparently displeased and alarmed the Dutch West India Company, so a charge was preferred against him of selling arms and ammunition to the Indians. It is probable that he did sell to the Indians, for that was a part of the trade with them and was nothing more than the Dutch Company was doing, the trouble being that that company wished to keep all the good things to itself. He was arrested

by order of Governor Stuyvesant in 1648, and imprisoned in Fort Amsterdam. All of his papers and books were destroyed and he was sentenced to the entire loss of all the wealth which his energy and keenness in business had accumulated and to banishment from the Colony for a term of five years. It is quite evident from the action taken by them, that his friends and neighbors regarded his arrest and punishment, for the crime of making money rapidly, as unjust, as it really was, for many of the most prominent citizens took the matter up, and, although his property was not restored to him, once it got into the hands of the Colonial authorities, his term of banishment was remitted. It was then that he showed the Schermerhorn determination—a quality which was even magnified in some of his descendants—for instead of being disheartened, or going to some other place or Colony, he remained and began all over again to accumulate a fortune. He died in 1689 leaving a fortune of \$22,000, as much in those days as five times the sum would be now. His death occurred in Schenectady where he had lived for several years. Of his three sons, Ryer, Simon and Jacob, the first was the only one who settled in Schenectady permanently.

Ryer Schermerhorn (the name in Holland was written, Schermer Horne) married the widow of Helmer Otten. She was Ariaantje Bratt, of Esopus. Mrs. Otten was possessed of considerable property, in the Colony and in Holland, from her former husband Helmer Otten. As was the custom in those days before marrying again, she entered into an agreement with the guardians of her children to secure to them their share of their father's property.

Although Ryer Schermerhorn was not one of the Original Fifteen Proprietors of 1662, he was one of the five named in the Schenectady Patent of 1684.

The reason for the patent of 1684 from Governor Dongon was this: The Fifteen Original Proprietors had obtained possession of the land by deed from the real owners of it, the Mohawk Indians and if the Colony had remained in the possession of the

Dutch, any further evidence of right to the land might not have been necessary. The Colony, however, passed into the possession of Britain and it soon became evident that complications would arise in regard to titles, hence, the necessity for a patent. In 1690 he was a member of the Provincial Assembly and a justice of the



*Pear Tree 150 Years Old, set out by Engelije Bradt, Daughter of Arent Bradt.*

peace and in 1700, he was appointed assistant Judge of the Court of Common Pleas, all of which shows that he was a man of affairs and occupied a prominent place in the community. When the year 1700 opened, Ryer Schermerhorn was the only survivor of the five original patentees. He remained as such till 1714 and this fact gave rise to a heated contest between himself and the people of Schenectady, who accused him of acting in an arbitrary manner over the affairs of the settlement and of high-handedness in refusing to give an account of his doings to them.

The patent of Schenectady included about 80,000 acres, the affairs of which were absolutely in the control of the five patentees and their heirs and successors. In 1700, when Ryer



Schermerhorn was the sole surviving patentee the people objected to being under the control of one man. They said that he disposed of the public lands belonging to the village without giving any account of the transactions, so they petitioned for a new patent in October, 1702, which should give them the right to elect five trustees to serve three years, who should be required to render an accounting of their trust to their successors. This patent was granted in February of the following year and Colonel Peter Schuyler, John S. Glen, Adam Vrooman and John Wemp were made trustees to serve with Ryer Schermerhorn. But the Schermerhorn determination asserted itself. Ryer utterly disregarded the new patent, claiming to be the sole trustee of the village. He continued to receive the rents and other profits of the town and brought suits in the courts in his own name without giving any account to the people. Even the fact that he was suspended by the Governor made no difference with him. He fell back upon the authority of the Patent of 1684, which was really binding notwithstanding the granting of the Patent of 1703. He knew that the old patent gave to the five trustees, their heirs and assigns forever, the control of the land and, as survivor, he intended to live up to the rights secured to him in that patent. From the standpoint of Ryer Schermerhorn and by precedent, he was right. But the germ of that great principle of "government of the people by the people for the people" although not expressed in words till many years later, was beginning to take root, probably without any suspicion of that fact by those most interested.

The people, seeing that the determination of Ryer Schermerhorn was based upon solid foundations, petitioned, by two of the new trustees, Col. Schuyler and John S. Glen, for an annual election of trustees with a more strict provision requiring an accounting of their proceedings. This petition was granted and a new charter was given in April, 1705, with Ryer Schermerhorn's name not among the trustees. In 1704 the Governor and Council gave a hearing to Mr. Schermerhorn. He was suspended

as a trustee but this mattered little to him. He disregarded the action of the Governor and Council, insisted that he was the only trustee, and persisted in refusing to render an accounting, so in July, 1705, the new trustees began a suit in the Chancery Court against him. This suit was the first of a series brought by both sides for a period of nearly one hundred years, the second Ryer Schermerhorn, a grandson of the first, continuing the contest till his death, in 1795, but not one of them was ever finished. Ryer brought a counter suit against the trustees John S. Glen, Adam Vrooman, Daniel J. Van Antwerp and John B. Van Eps. The trustees, weary with the contest, attempted to affect a compromise but without success and an appeal to the Colonial Legislature also failed to accomplish anything.

In 1714, Schermerhorn, on October 22 and 23, by lease and release, conveyed his title to William Appel of New York—Appel kept a tavern in that city—with the understanding that he, Appel, should reconvey the lands to Ryer Schermerhorn, Jan Wemp, Johannes Teller, Arent Bradt, and Barent Wemp. This was done on the 25th and 26th of the same month and year. To confirm this conveyance, Governor Hunter granted the fourth charter, on November 14, 1714. This grant was practically the same as that of 1684, the township in both patents being granted to Ryer Schermerhorn and his associates, their heirs, successors and assigns. These conveyances settled for a time the controversy over the management of the common lands.

In 1750 Jan Schermerhorn, a son of Ryer, who died in 1719, claimed that all who were freeholders of Schenectady when the Dongan Patent was granted in 1684, had equal title in the common lands. This meant that only those would inherit who were descended from the first settlers in the male line of eldest sons, for at this time the law of primogeniture was in force. There were, when this claim was set up, but twenty-seven eldest sons who were legal heirs. The death of Jan Schermerhorn in 1752, before legal action had been brought, ended this claim.

But this death did not end the contest, for Jan left a son,

another Ryer Schermerhorn, who had all of the devotion to purpose and the determination for which the family was noted. He began suit against Arent Bradt and others as patentees, in 1755, for his share in the common lands which he claimed were his by inheritance from his grandfather, the first Ryer. For forty-one years he fought for what he believed to be his rights and died in 1795 with the struggle unfinished. So strongly did he feel upon the subject that he willed the contest to his heirs with the penalty of disinheritance should they fail to continue it.

This second Ryer retained Judge James Duane, of glorious memory, as his attorney. Judge Duane told his client that a document in the hands of a man by the name of Appel, living in New York city, was of the greatest importance to his case, but for it to be of use, it must be in Albany within eight days. Between Albany and New York was nothing but a wilderness with here and there an Indian trail, and the Hudson river. To make the journey to New York and back through the woods, in eight days, was utterly impossible and the river craft were far too slow. No Schermerhorn had yet been beaten by difficulties and this member of the family decided that the journey could and should be made in one of the light and graceful birchbark canoes of the Indians, with his muscle and will as the motive power, so he started alone, obtained the document and was in Albany again before the expiration of the eight days. It is a most unfortunate thing for the present generation that Mr. Schermerhorn wrote no account of his trip. As he was a man who did things without talking about them, one of the most interesting journeys of the early days is left to the imagination.

Another instance of the irresistible will possessed by these men, was shown in even a more striking manner by Simon Schermerhorn, one of the first Ryer's brothers. Simon and his family lived in the village at the time the French and Indians destroyed it and butchered the greater portion of its inhabitants, that bitterly cold night in the winter of 1690. Simon was shot through the thigh in the fight and realizing that someone must give the alarm to Albany he mounted a horse and rode pellmell,

notwithstanding that every jolt in the saddle caused the greatest agony. He started by the regular path, over what is now the Albany turnpike, but when in the neighborhood of the Stanford place he heard what he supposed to be Indians, so he turned off and took the longer way through Niskayuna, fearing that his capture or death would delay the carriage of the news to Albany so long that help from the fort would be too late.

The following verses were written by Aaron B. Pratt, of Albany, on the historical ride of Simon Schermerhorn, who, wounded and suffering from the cold of midwinter, rode to Albany, twenty miles, to give the alarm on the night of the Massacre.

Silent and cold old Mohawk's tide  
Swept through the forest, dark and wide,  
When on her bank, amid the wood,  
Schenectady's rude hamlet stood.

'Twas midnight in that ancient town;  
The drifting snow was coming down,  
The people all were wrapt in sleep,  
No sentinel there to vigils keep.

The winter's thick mantle was outspread  
To break the sound of hostile tread,  
And while they slept, no dream of harm,  
Like lightning came the dread alarm,

More fearful than the shriek of shell  
Broke on the air a savage yell,  
With horror, dread, each Dutchman woke  
To meet alike the deadly stroke.

Butchered and brained, consumed by fire,  
The heartless horde wreaked vengeance dire;  
The French and Indians both allied,  
To spread destruction far and wide.

No age or sex these demons spared  
But all alike their vengeance shared;  
Babes in innocence yet unborn,  
Were from the womb untimely torn.

One man there was, oh Dutchman brave!  
Who managed there his life to save,  
And means at hand he quickly found  
To spread th'alarm the country round.

He quickly mounts a straying steed  
By fate provided for his need;  
With ne'er a saddle, bridle, rein,  
The nearest town he seeks to gain.

He bravely faced the jaws of death  
Its sickening glow and sulphrus breath;  
And ne'er a rider rode so well  
As rode he through the gate of hell.

Shot through the thigh, he heeded not,  
The heartless foeman's cruel shot;  
His wounded steed made bold essay,  
To bear his rider from the fray.

Tho' wounded sore and nearly dead,  
Each nerve he strained and forged ahead;  
And in the forest dread and drear,  
Rider and horse did disappear.

Knee deep the snow, and drifting down,  
And twenty miles to nearest town;  
Old Albany the destined place  
For which our hero made this race.

Ere morning broke he reached the fort  
And quickly made his sad report;  
Cannon took up the wild alarm,  
And warning sent o're field and farm.

The people all with one accord  
Fell on their knees and thanked the Lord  
That he had sent a spirit brave  
To warning bring, their lives to save.

Simon Schermerhorn, our hero's name  
Ne'er filled the sounding trumps of fame;  
Tho' wounded, weak and out of breath,  
He rode this race of life and death.

Eclipsing Sheriden's famous ride,  
To check the battle's bloody tide;  
Or even that of Paul Revere,  
That roused the Nation's lusty cheer.

As far as is known these are the only verses on Schermerhorn's ride that have been published.

While there are several properties now occupied by lineal descendants of the original owners, the Schermerhorn family is probably unique in that the property has been occupied by the family *without change of name* for 240 years, the present owners being of the eighth generation.

The home of the late Simon J. Schermerhorn, Congressman, is charmingly situated on a terrace a quarter of a mile back from the Mohawk river and sixty feet above it, at the foot of a bluff rising from the rear of the grounds. The outlook is toward the south-east. Over the river bottoms on the south side of the Mohawk a fine view of the city of Schenectady is had and on the north side of the Mohawk, the view extends over the river bottoms including "Maalwyck," the "Camp" and village of Scotia beyond to the pretty Glenville hills. A little distance further back from the Mohawk, at the foot of the Rotterdam hills, are the residences of other members of the family.

Had Congressman Schermerhorn not inherited the characteristics of "digging deep" into important matters and of persisting in so doing—characteristics inherited from his remarkable ancestors, the two Ryer Schermerhorns, grandfather and grandson, which they, in turn, came by naturally from the village of Schermerhorn, in Holland—Schenectady would not now have the supply of delicious, pure spring water which it has. These wells were dug at the foot of the bluff, near the Mohawk, but this was not done till Congressman Schermerhorn had spent considerable time in an effort to convince skeptical city officials and other prominent citizens of the city, that an ample supply of pure

spring water was waiting deep down in the ground to make Schenectady famous among cities for its unequalled supply of water.



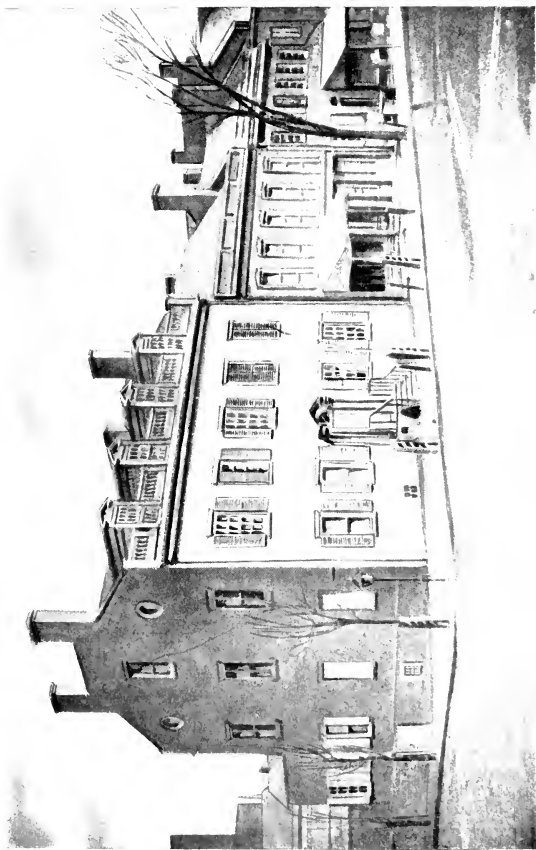
*A Silver Quart Cider Mug marked  
Jacobus Schermershorn.*

### SCHERMERHORN-CAMPBELL.

Daniel Campbell came to Schenectady in 1754, in his twenty-third year, with a tiny cash capital and an immense inherited capital, consisting of energy, determination to succeed, honesty and business acumen, all characteristics of his Scotch-Irish descent.

Mr. Campbell began his business career with a pack on his back as an Indian trader. The excellent quality of his goods, his industry, economy, and honesty gave him patrons which so greatly exceeded his individual efforts that he was soon obliged to increase his capacity to handle it and, at the same time, he increased his operations. When the Revolution broke out, Mr. Campbell was regarded as a man of considerable fortune. After the Revolution, he, with James Ellice, John Duncan and James Phyn, became one of the greatest merchants and wealthiest men of the state. As a merchant in Indian trade, and by purchasing "soldiers' rights", he amassed a great fortune.

He married Angelica Bradt, a daughter of Arent S. Bradt (or Bratt, as the name was then sometimes spelled) and had one son, David Campbell, who was born in 1768. David died in June, 1801, leaving his property to his father. Daniel Campbell,



1762. Daniel Campbell's City House, North-East Corner State and Church Streets.



Sr., died in the following year at the age of seventy-one. One-third of his great wealth was left to relatives in Ireland, the remainder going absolutely to his wife.

Mr. Campbell and Sir William Johnson were warm and intimate friends and upon the occasions when Sir William was in Schenectady in the interests of St. George's Church, or on other business, Mr. Campbell's house was his home for the time being. This house was built for Mr. Campbell by Samuel Fuller, in 1762, on the north-east corner of State and Church streets where it stands now as solid as the year it was built. There have been but few changes made in the house, the chief ones being to the roof. In 1771, Mr. Campbell was one of the judges of the Court of Common Pleas of Albany County, of which Schenectady was then a part.

Mrs. Campbell, wishing to continue the name in America, left all of her great wealth to Daniel D. Schermerhorn on condition that he take the name Campbell, which he did later by act of the Legislature. Mrs. Campbell died at the age of eighty, in 1812.





*Governor Yates' House, Union Street.*

## Chapter XVI.

### YATES HOUSE.



THE Abraham Yates house, on Union street, nearly opposite the Court house, is an excellent example of the substantial buildings erected by well-to-do citizens from 1700 to '50. This house was built by Mr. Yates, about 1730, and is in perfect condition, at the present time. It is in the best and most aristocratic residential part of Schenectady.

The Yates family is one of the few Anglo-Saxon families who were among the old settlers. The first of the name to come to America, was Joseph Yates, who arrived soon after the Colony was delivered to the British, in 1664. He worked with M. J. Van Brommel, in Albany, as a shoemaker. He married Hjbortje Van Brommel. Mr. Yates died in 1730, and was survived by seven children, one of whom, Robert Yates, settled in Schenectady, in 1711, at the age of twenty-three. Robert Yates married Greitje C. DeGraaf, of the "Hoek," just west of Scotia, where he lived and followed his father's trade.

He had a village-lot on State street, near Ferry street and a rather extensive tannery on the bank of the pond, at the end of Ferry street, where it joined Mill lane. He had, also, farm-land on the flat, where the General Electric Company's works are, which was part of the Van Curler farm. This he bought in 1741. He died in 1748, leaving his business to his sons, Joseph and Abraham—the latter, selling his interest to the former.

The men of the Yates family were prominent in the Revolution and in the practice of law. Robert, a grandson of the first Robert Yates, who settled in Schenectady, in 1711, was born in 1738, married Jannetje Van Ness, in Albany, in 1765, where he remained to practice law. This Robert Yates, an ardent patriot,

was a member of the Committee of Safety in Revolutionary days; a member of the State Constitutional Convention of 1777; of the Federal Convention of 1787; and of the State Convention for ratifying the acts of the Convention. He finally attained to the distinguished honor of the chief-justiceship of the Supreme Court of New York. He died in 1801. His daughter married James Fairlee, who was an aid-de-camp to Baron Steuben, in the Revolution. His son, John Van Ness Yates, was Secretary of State, from 1818-'26.

Robert N. Yates, a grandson of the original Yates ancestor, was born in 1789. He was lieutenant in the Rifle Regiment in the Regular Army in the War of 1812, in which he was killed. Christopher Yates, born in 1737, a son of the original Albany Yates, was a captain, under Sir William Johnson and a colonel in the Revolution. He married in 1761, Jannetje, a daughter of Andries Bradt. He died in 1785. Colonel Christopher Yates' son, Joseph Yates, was born in 1768. He was the first mayor of Schenectady; State Senator, in 1807; judge of the Supreme Court, in 1808; and Governor of New York, in 1823-'24. He died in 1837. Another son of Colonel Yates, Henry Yates, was born in 1791. He was a lawyer; State Senator for several terms, and a member of the Council of Appointment. He died in 1854. The Rev. Dr. Andrew Yates, the third son of Colonel Christopher Yates, was born in 1773. He was a graduate of Yale College, in 1793, and studied for the ministry under the Rev. Dr. J. H. Livingston and was ordained a minister of the Dutch Reformed Church. He was professor of Greek and Latin, in Union College, in 1797-'01; pastor of the East Hartford, Connecticut, Congregational Church till 1814, when he returned to Union and was professor of Mental and Moral Philosophy, till 1825. He then, accepted the principalship of the Chittenango Polytechnic Institute. He died in 1844. Dr. Yates was married twice. His first wife was Mary Austin and their son, John A. Yates, was born in 1801. He was professor of Oriental Literature, in Union College, from 1823 to his death, in 1844. Professor Yates' son,

J. B. Yates, was the father of Austin A. Yates, now residing on Washington avenue, Schenectady, and of Commander Arthur R. Yates, U. S. N.

Of the several titles to which Austin A. Yates has a right, that of "Major" is the most popular, with his intimates; for it was as a soldier that the Yates qualities showed themselves most prominently; and these were qualities which attracted the affections and admir-

a t i o n. Hon. Austin A. Yates, like his predecessors mentioned in this article, with one exception, was a graduate of Union College; he studied law and was admitted to practice; was judge of the County Court, and Member of Assembly. In the Civil War, he was captain of H. Co., One Hundred and Thirty-fourth New York Vol-



*One of the Entrances to the Residence of Hon. A. A. Yates,  
on Washington Avenue.*

unteers and, later, he was captain of F. Co., United States Veterans. This F. Co. was famous as being the one chosen to have custody of the persons and charge of the execution, of the assassins of President Lincoln. He was, later, promoted to the rank of brevet-major

of the U. S. V. and, on April 9, 1898, was commissioned major of the Second Regiment, N. Y. N. G., for service in the Spanish-American War.

The youngest son of Colonel Christopher Yates, John B. Yates, was born in 1784. This son became the most active man of affairs in the military, political and financial interests of his State of any member of the family, chiefly because the times were propitious for the Yates qualities to appear at the front. After being graduated with honors from Union College, he studied law in Albany, with his elder brother, Henry, and was admitted to the bar in 1805. In the second war with the "old country"—speaking from the standpoint of an Anglo-Saxon—he raised a large company of horse-artillery and was commissioned its captain, by Governor Tompkins. Captain Yates and his company served in the campaign of 1813, under General Wade Hampton, on the northern frontier of New York. Hampton appointed him one of his aids and sent him to relieve Fort Erie, where General Brown was bottled-up by a superior force of British. After the war, in 1815-'16, he went to Congress and took as active a part in the civil affairs of the Nation as he had in the military affairs. Mr. Yates was possessed of an extensive estate and great wealth. In Chittenango, his home, he had two thousand acres of land, on which were flour, oil, lime, and saw-mills, a woolen factory, stores and a boat-yard with dry-dock, where boats were built and overhauled. His pay-roll often had one hundred and fifty names upon it. At the time the project for the Welland canal came near to expiring, for lack of the life-giving qualities of money, Mr. Yates stirred up enough enthusiasm, in New York and in England, to carry the project to completion. He showed his faith in the canal, for which he was asking others to subscribe money, by investing nearly \$150,000 of his own. He was the first judge of Madison County. His death occurred on his estate in



*Old-time Leather Fire Bucket  
owned by Hon. A. A. Yates.*

1836.

## Chapter XVII.

### Educational.

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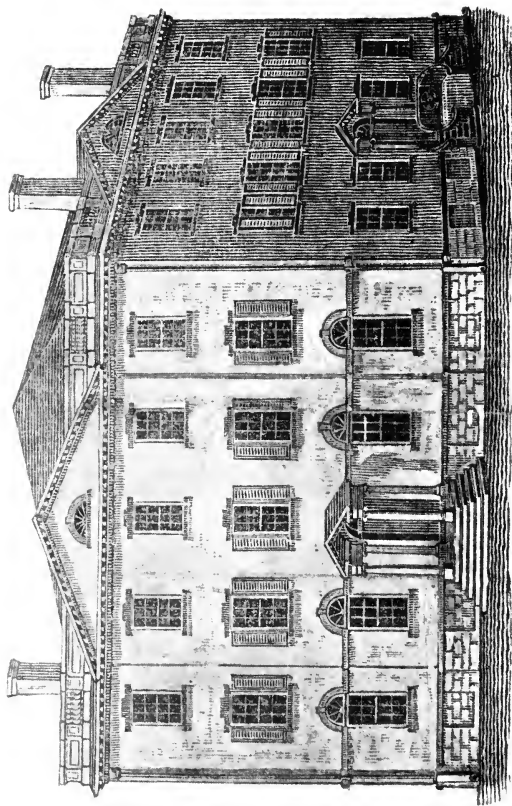
#### UNION CLASSICAL INSTITUTE.



BUILDING which has seen more of the ups and downs of life than any other in Schenectady, was that which the present generation knew as the Union Classical Institute, on the corner of Union and Church streets, which was recently sold to the Mohawk club. This building had more endearing associations connected with it, for the present generation and its immediate senior generation, than any other in the city, for it was for years the scene of scholastic triumphs for one thing, and of scores of good-natured dare-diviltry and school-boy escapades, which are so dear to the memory of the "old-fellows" after they have boys of their own. Besides this, there has been more than one love story started in the class rooms of this old building which has ended happily in the ceremony presided over by the minister.

The building as shown in the picture, was erected for the home of the Mohawk bank in 1820. This occupied the first floor, with the upper floors as a residence for the cashier, David Boyd, who was in his day a man well known in banking circles in and out of the city, as was the bank's paying teller, Volney Freeman.

Mr. Boyd was a short, stocky man with sandy hair and florid complexion who was wedded to his bank. It was his wife, his children; his work and his recreation, for he was a bachelor, his sisters keeping house for him. It was said that he frequently sat up the greater part of the night watching the bank to see that nothing happened to it or its contents.



**Mohawk Bank, Schenectady.**

*Better known as the Union Classical Institute, now the Home of the Mohawk Club.*



The entrance to the bank was on the corner; that for the residence was on Church street, and in those days had the double twisting stairway leading to the entrance hall. The building was solidly built of stone and had in the basement a vault of masonry, which was in its day burglar proof. This vault remained as solid the day the building was turned into a club as it was the day it was **built**.

After the Mohawk bank had occupied the building for several years it was decided to move to new quarters. The location chosen was on State street. When this change was made, Chauncey Vibbard, a man whose varied career was in keeping with the building, purchased it as a residence. Mr. Vibbard spent a large sum of money in converting the building into a luxurious home. During his occupancy the building experienced the first of its great changes, for Vibbard was a high liver and something of a high flyer and although there were no "Seely dinners" known in those days, the high-jinks which took place in the hospitable Vibbard residence would furnish the subject for many a modern newspaper sensation.

One of the largest robberies ever committed in this city, so far as the value of the property stolen is concerned, was in the Vibbard mansion. Mr. Vibbard had a house party of six wealthy New Yorkers up for a week's sojourn. This fact became known in New York, probably through the society column of one of the papers, to some clever New York crooks who followed the party up to Schenectady and one night burglarized the house and stole several thousands of dollars worth of jewelry.

Chauncey Vibbard was a man of strength, who did not know the meaning of failure until the more modern and cold-blooded methods of railroad financiering, introduced by the Vanderbilt regime, became the vogue. Vibbard started as a clerk of the old Schenectady and Utica Railroad; the third oldest in the country and the first, with the Mohawk & Hudson, to regularly carry passengers, and with that road, was the parent of the present 10,000-mile system of the New York Central & Hudson River

Railroad. Vibbard's ability was recognized, and finally he became the superintendent of the road. With the advent of Commodore Vanderbilt, the Vibbard interests lost a great deal of money and eventually, the Vibbard mansion was sold to Edward C. Delevan, of Ballston Center, in Saratoga County. Mr. Delevan was prominent in the cause of temperance in this state and was a warm friend of Dr. Eliphalet Nott, the president of Union College, whose name, with those of Woolsey and Porter of Yale, McCosh of Princeton, and Seely of Amherst, will ever be honored in America. But the thing which made Delevan most famous was the fine old hotel in Albany which he built, and managed, and which bore his name. It used to be said, that more laws were made and more political careers cut short in that house than were made or cut short up in the capitol.

It was through the friendship of Dr. Nott for Delevan that the latter gave to Union College his large and valuable collections of fossils, and of drawings of the human organs showing the effects of alcohol. During Mr. Delevan's occupancy of the mansion, it was left as Mr. Vibbard arranged it.

The next change for the famous old building was when it was sold by Delevan to William T. Crane, a manufacturer, and the diametrical opposite of the two former occupants. Mr. Crane was a man of dollars and cents which were made in his large knitting mills located near this city. He was a man of some prominence and Crane's Village, six miles west of this city on the Mohawk, was named in his honor. With the advent of Mr. Crane the wine suppers of the Vibbard days and the thoughtful company and elegance of the Delevan days, disappeared and only their ghosts remained to comfort the building, the spacious rooms of which had been the silent witnesses of so much revelry and so much of the wisdom which fell from the lips of Dr. Nott and his friend Delevan. Mr. Crane lived in the house but a short time, when a committee formed for the purpose of separating the "prep." school from Union College, bought the building and the U. C. I. was born. The building was filled five days of the week, for nine

months of the year, with the youth and life and hope of the boys and girls who studied and recited in its rooms. The feelings of the "old" boys and girls of the dear old U. C. I. has been well set forth in their volume "Memorian" which was issued just after the removal from that building to the elegant new High School on Nott Terrace.

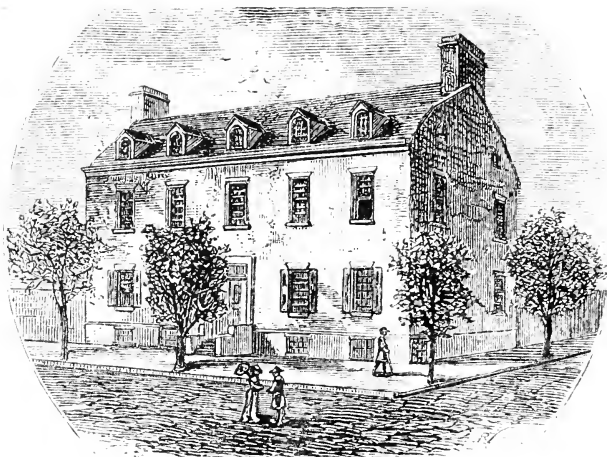
#### THE SCHENECTADY ACADEMY.

The Schenectady Academy was the child of the First Dutch Reformed Church and was built by the Church. The people appreciated the advantages of such an institution. They gave it their patronage and furnished it with a library. The Superintendent of the building operations was William Schermerhorn. The building was large, was two stories in height and had two large room on both floors. It was built upon the north-west corner of Union and Ferry streets. Each pupil paid four shillings a year to the Church, and its minister respectively. The four shillings paid yearly by each pupil, was devoted to the education of such students as could not pay their own way. In other words, the money was to found what is now called a scholarship.

On April 7, 1785, the Consistory of the Church and twenty-seven prominent citizens, met in the tavern kept by Reuben Simonds, on Church street, to sign articles of agreement for the management and support of the academy. These citizens were C. A. Van Slyck, Andries Van Patten, Joseph Yates, Cornelius Vrooman, S. A. Brat, Isaac Quackenboss, Abraham Swits, G. A. Lansing, Daniel Campbell, Claes Van der Volgen, Peter Van Gyseling, Christopher Yates, Henry Glen, Abraham Oothout, John Richardson, Robert Moyston, William Van Ingen, John Glen (by Henry Glen) Abraham Fonda, Harmanus Bradt (by A. Oothout) R. Mynderse, William Mead, Cornelis Van Dyke, Isaac Vrooman, Nicholas Veeder, and the Rev. Dirk Romeyn.

These names are given, because the twenty-seven were practically, the founders of Union College, as the Academy grew into that institution.

The first board of trustees was composed of: The Rev. D. Romeyn, president; Dirk Van Ingen, secretary; Abraham Oothout, treasurer; John Glen, Daniel Campbell, Henry Glen, A. Frey, Claes Van der Volgen, John Sanders, Peter Vrooman, B. Dietz.



*Schenectady Academy, Corner Union and Ferry Streets. First Building Used by Union College.*

In April, 1793, the building was made over to the trustee by the Church. In September, 1796, the trustee made over the building to the trustees of Union College, that corporation having been chartered. The Academy building was sold and the money received from the sale was used to erect the first college building. This stood on the property now occupied by the Union School.

#### UNION COLLEGE AND DR. NOTT.

Although Union College had been in existence for nine years before Eliphalet Nott, D. D., became its president, the real life of the College was so entirely due to Dr. Nott as its president for sixty-three years of untiring effort for its good, that the history of the institution and the life of the man are almost identical.

As has been said elsewhere, Schenectady was very early an educational center. It possessed good and prosperous schools, of a high grade for the times, years before any other colonial settlement in this part of the Colony. It was these schools which resulted in the institution of Union in 1795. That the charter for Union College was obtained, was chiefly due to the efforts of the Rev. Dr. Dirck Romeyn, who was pastor of the old Dutch Reformed Church in Schenectady and that this city was chosen as its location, was entirely due to his efforts and those of General Schuyler.

The immediate parent of Union College was the Academy, which was built of stone, in 1785, on the corner of Union and Ferry streets, for, in 1795 Union College was begun in this building and continued in it till 1804. In that year the College occupied the fine building which was built for that purpose, on Union street where the Union School now stands. This building was begun in 1796, but because of a lack of money it was not finished till 1804. It was built of stone and cost, with its lot, \$60,000, which was a large sum in those days. The building was three stories high and covered a ground space of 150 by 60 feet. It was here where Dr. Nott began his work which placed him on a par with the greatest educators of his day. It is a fact that Dr. Nott, like so many of Schenectady's prominent men, was a New England Yankee.

The men and women from the "Old Country" who came to Connecticut and composed the New Haven and later, the Hartford Colonies, were of a different stamp from those who had settled the older portions of New England. While the settlers of the older New England Colonies were men of strong character, honesty and fearlessness, they were from a more humble class. The families which came to Connecticut occupied good, and a few high, social positions in the "Old Country" and as a rule were possessed of considerable wealth. It was of such stock that the Notts came.



*Entrance to Union College Campus.*

John Nott, Dr. Nott's first American ancestor, settled in Wethersfield, which is now a beautiful suburb of Hartford, Connecticut, in 1640. Sergeant John Nott was a man of note in the affairs of the Colony and of the highest social position. Being possessed of ample means he was naturally a land owner to a considerable extent in the Connecticut valley, where the soil is even more fertile than are the Mohawk valley flats. In 1665 and for several years thereafter, he represented the town of Wethersfield in the General Assembly of the Colony. The two daughters and one son, who survived him, all married well. Elizabeth married Robert Reeve, who was the ancestor of Judge Tappan Reeve, the founder of the Litchfield Law School; Hannah married John Hale and so became the grandmother of one of the Nation's finest patriots, Captain Nathan Hale, who grieved because he had but one life to sacrifice for the cause and country he loved so well, but the youngest child, John, is of greatest interest to us as he was the great-grandfather of Eliphalet. John married a widow, Mrs. Paience Miller, on March 28, 1683. They had seven sons and two daughters. The youngest of these children, Abraham, was born on January 29, 1696, and was the grandfather of Eliphalet.

Abraham Nott was graduated from Yale College with honors in the first class to graduate after the College was moved from Saybrook to New Haven, in 1720. He then studied for the ministry and was ordained in Saybrook in 1725 and immediately became pastor of the Second Congregational Church of Saybrook. This was his first and only pastorate, for it lasted till his death in 1759. The Notts were powerful men, physically as well as mentally. There is a tradition in Saybrook that he was able to lift a barrel of cider and drink from the bung-hole and that no man had ever been able to stand against him in wrestling. When Abraham Nott died he left four sons; Stephen, born on July 20, 1728, the second son, was the father of Dr. Eliphalet Nott, for sixty-three years president of Union College.

Besides leaving enviable reputations, the Notts had left considerable fortunes, as they were thrifty and possessed of good

business instincts which enabled them to increase that which was inherited, but Stephen, the father of Dr. Nott, seemed to lack these qualities or was the victim of what in these days would be called a "hoodoo."

Stephen received a good common school education and was regarded as a man of intelligence, but his life was a dismal failure and a continuation of struggles against misfortune, each of which left the family worse off than it was before. At the age of twenty-one, in 1749, he opened a store in Saybrook, with a considerable capital at his command and with bright prospects. He married a daughter of Samuel Selden, of Lyme, and Deborah Selden Nott became the sustaining power of her unfortunate husband and the inspiration of her famous son, Dr. Eliphalet Nott. Deborah was but seventeen at the time of her marriage and was considered to be as lovely in spirit and mind as she was in person. There was something odd about Stephen and from written history and tradition it would almost seem that his associates in business did not regard him as being any too scrupulous. At any rate, they pushed him so hard, as one misfortune after another crippled him, that he was driven to the wall financially and was forced to remain in hiding to avoid incarceration in the debtors' prison. It is quite evident that Dr. Nott inherited the characteristics of his grandfathers on the Nott side of the house, and of his mother who proved herself a heroine under adversity, rather than from his father.

For ten years nothing serious happened to Stephen and then, in 1759, his home and the greater part of its contents were burned. Samuel, a boy of five years was barely rescued by his mother and a minister who was a guest of the family was also rescued with difficulty. The friends and neighbors showed the spirit of those days by helping Stephen to rebuild. Stephen's business was the trading of "store goods" for horses. When a herd had been collected, they were driven to New Jersey and sold. Within a year from the burning of his home, while on his way back from New Jersey, where he had received a large sum of money from



the sale of his horses he was waylaid, knocked from his horse and every penny of the large sum he was carrying in his saddlebags was stolen. Either Stephen had not been successful in his business up to this time, or he was extravagant, for he was depending upon the money stolen from him to meet his obligations to his creditors. They showed an unwillingness to wait, so his property was seized and his arrest was ordered. Stephen escaped the debtors' prison for several months by leaving his home. Finally, when he returned, he was arrested and put in jail, but a special act, soon after passed in regard to poor debtors, released him.

Stephen Nott and his family then moved to East Haddam, where he purchased a small place on credit through the kind offices of a relative and started in the tanning business, which he had learned in his youth. East Haddam was an out of the way place, the business was very small, but the struggle with poverty was very great. Here it was that the grand qualities of his wife, Deborah, were shown. There were long periods, while Stephen was ill, when her work was the support of the family. In addition to her work she educated the children as there was no school within reaching distance. After a struggle lasting several years the family moved to Foxtown only to continue the struggle. In 1772, sixty acres of waste land were exchanged for the Foxtown place in the Town of Ashford, about thirty miles from Hartford, in Windham County. On this rock-strewn barren land was a poor little house in which Eliphalet was born on June 25, 1773.

The childhood of Eliphalet was not particularly different from that of other boys of poor parents, except that the habit of giving a verbal report of the hour-long sermons to his mother, whose lack of health kept her much at home, made him more serious than children of his age would naturally be and laid the foundation for the wonderful memory which exhibited itself in later years and for the unusual power of mental application. A sermon which was preached by the Baptist pastor of the church where he sometimes attended, it being near home, while the Congregational Church was several miles distant, caused him to tear

up a new-fangled headdress belonging to one of his sisters, because the preacher had denounced that kind of head-gear as an invention of the devil. However good his motive may have been, his sister and mother saw it in a different light and Eliphalet was spanked.

At the age of eight, he passed a winter in Hartland with a married sister and in the spring he went to his elder brother Samuel, who was pastor of the Congregational Church in Franklin, Connecticut. The Rev. Samuel was a typical Congregational-Connecticut minister of that period; good, just, faithful, but with no more conception of the joyousness of childhood and youth than an oyster has of music, so little Eliphalet decided, after two years of restraint and repression, to run away to sea. He was persuaded to give up the idea and to return to his home, to continue his studies with his mother, till her death.

When fourteen, he began the study of medicine with the local physician, Dr. Palmer, but his first experience at a surgical operation proved his unfitness for the profession, he being overcome by the sight of blood and the suffering, and soon after he gave it up. On October 24, 1778, his mother died. Besides the relationship of parent and child, Eliphalet and his mother were confidential friends and companions and, as the great educator said in after life: "Whatever I am is due to my mother."

Soon after the death of his mother, Eliphalet returned to his brother Samuel's home to continue his studies and, in the meantime, he helped support himself by teaching in Franklin and the vicinity schools. His success as a teacher was so notable that he was appointed to the principalship of the Plainfield Academy before he was twenty years old. It was in this school that he conceived that peculiar system of government which many years later was applied with such great success in Union College. This system was based upon an intimate feeling of good will and affection between the master and pupils; self respect on the part of the pupils and veneration for the institution of which they

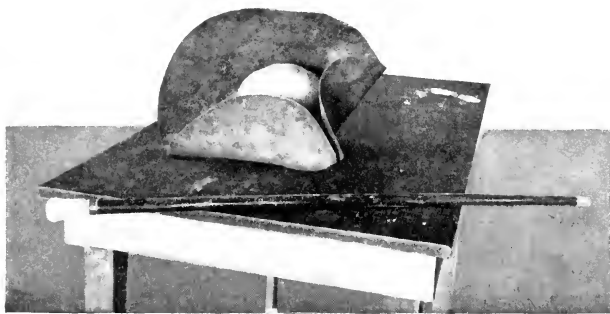
were members. The Plainfield Academy was one of the best schools in Connecticut and included several hundred pupils of both sexes.

While teaching in the Academy, he had continued his studies for the purpose of taking a degree at Brown University and for future studies for the ministry. He took the senior examinations at Brown in the autumn of 1795, and passed, but as he had not been regularly connected with the college classes and so could not receive the usual diploma, he was given a testimonial and an honorary A. M. He was examined by the New London County Association and was licensed to preach on June 26, 1796. Several attempts were made to induce him to settle in a parish in Connecticut, but he refused, his belief being that he could accomplish more good in the thinly settled portion of New York west of the Hudson. He obtained a roving commission from the Domestic Missionary Society of Connecticut as missionary in New York. On July 4, 1796, he married Maria, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Dr. Joel Benedict, minister of the Congregational Church of Plainfield and then started on his journey to the wilderness of New York, leaving his bride in the home of her father till he had made a home for her.

His journey took him to Hartford, Springfield and then to Albany where he encountered that suspicion of strangers which was peculiar to the Dutch and which is met with to-day in the more tempered form of an utter disregard of any social obligation on their parts toward persons, not of Dutch descent, residing among them. He arrived in Albany late and stayed at a tavern kept by a Dutchman who could not speak English and, as his guest could not speak Dutch, he naturally took it for granted that Dr. Nott was a suspicious character, so he locked him in his room and kept him in it till he saw fit to let him out in the morning.

Dr. Nott's destination was a little way beyond Cherry Valley, but he was called back to that village by the Presbyterian Church, and two months from the day he first saw Cherry Valley he was

its pastor. There he lived for about two years, his wife having joined him. Besides the duties of pastor he had those of teacher too, for it was impossible for him to live anywhere without following this loved calling for which he was so eminently fitted. He was loved and respected by the parents and children and his wife held an equal place in their hearts and esteem. Mrs. Nott was possessed of a joyous disposition and unusual refinement and cultivation of mind, which attracted all classes and conditions of persons. She entered heart and mind into her husband's work and also devoted herself to the people of his church. Mrs. Nott's health became impaired to such an extent, that in 1798 she was taken to Ballston Springs to take the waters, which were even then celebrated for their beneficial qualities. Her strength was restored but she did not return to Cherry Valley, for her husband was called to the pastorate of the First Presbyterian Church, of



*Dr. Nott's Hat and Cane.*

Albany. Dr. Nott accepted and was ordained by the Presbytery, on October 13, 1798. He was installed at the same time, President John Blair Smith of Union College, preaching the sermon. While pastor of this church he was elected a trustee of Union College. Dr. Nott was a prime mover in the founding of the

Albany Academy in 1813, the building of which was begun in 1815 and finished in 1817 at an expense of \$100,000. In 1804 Mrs. Nott's health again became impaired and again she was taken to Ballston in the hope of a cure, but without avail, her death occurring on March 11, 1804. Three years later, on August 3, 1807, Dr. Nott married the widow of Benjamin Tibbetts, of Troy.

One of Dr. Nott's greatest public addresses, probably the greatest, was delivered in the old North Dutch Church in Albany, on the death of Alexander Hamilton, as the result of his duel with Aaron Burr. It was in the summer, after the delivery of this sermon, that he was invited to become president of Union College. After giving the subject careful consideration and obtaining the advice of friends upon whose disinterestedness he could depend, he accepted on September 14, 1804.



*Union College.*

In 1804 there were forty students in the college; the largest graduating class numbering seventeen. This was in 1803 and there was no increase till 1808 when there were eighteen who were graduated. In that year the growth of the college under the new president began, for in 1809 there were one hundred students in the four classes and twenty-nine were graduated. In 1813 there were more than two hundred students in the college

and forty-six received diplomas. The system of raising money by means of lotteries for the College, which was greatly in need of money in 1805, was adopted by the College, by act of the Legislature. This system was not regarded in any other than a perfectly natural way of obtaining the desired end. In fact, it was a popular method with churches as well as with educational institutions and municipalities. It was not till lotteries became a source of private profit that the law makers discovered that they were naughty.

As an educator, Dr. Nott was broad in his ideas of instruction as well as of discipline. In regard to discipline, he held in contempt the spirit which prompted the majestic judicial sittings of the faculty to investigate an infraction, by an undergraduate, of one of the many college rules or regulations, with their resultant fines, suspensions or expulsions, should the culprit be convicted of following the instincts of joyous youth to such an extent as to violate anything so awful in its importance, as a rule of the faculty. Dr. Nott felt that the faculty of a college would be much better employed if imparting instruction in the classroom than in spending hours, and sometimes days, investigating as to the hour when a student had put out his light; retired, arisen; or possibly the commission of so heinous a crime as the punching of a "townie's" head.

As a temperance reformer he was actually what that word implies—temperate in his methods of getting rid of the evil—for he was opposed to forcing reform in the use of alcoholic beverages beyond the point for which society was prepared, but at the same time, he believed it the duty of temperance people to never miss an opportunity for educating society up to the point of total abstinence.

As a man, he was possessed of a powerful physique; a happy disposition; a love of nature and the companionship of his fellow men. That he was determined to do that which he believed he should do, in opposition to the most flattering temptations, was shown by his repeated refusals to accept offers, far more lucra-

tive and more desirable from a social standpoint, from churches in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Albany. He believed that his work was in Schenectady as president of Union College; neither money nor social advantages counted with him.

Dr. Nott was a companionable man who delighted in excursions with the undergraduates and his interest in their sports was as great as it was in their character building and education. Like Woolsey, Porter and Dana, of Yale, and Dr. Holmes, he never grew old except in body, his spirit and love remained youthful and great to the day, when, overcome by the weight of years well spent, he was graduated from the University of the World into Eternity with the God he loved and served so faithfully with the Divine degree of: "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

His birth into the reward he had earned occurred on January 29, 1866, at the great age of ninety-three.

The subject of Dr. Nott would not be complete without something being said about Moses Viney, who, born a slave, lived the life of a Man and Christian; the loved servant and companion of Dr. Nott, who in turn was loved by Moses as no other man loved him, for it was the great educator, orator, philanthropist and greater Christian, who received the fugitive slave, paid the price of his servitude, gave him his manhood, treated him as he treated all men, with the added affection which Moses' devotion and fine qualities called forth.

Moses Viney was born in Talbot County, Maryland, on March 10, 1817, one of a family of twenty-one children. His master, William Murphy, gave him to his little son, Richard, who was a year older than Moses. He was treated with great kindness by the Murphy family, so it was the possession of the higher qualities and ambition which caused Moses to



*Stove Invented by Dr. Nott.*

run away, rather than harsh treatment. His passionate desire to be a citizen and cease to be a chattel caused him to determine upon death rather than capture.

Moses and two companions had received permission to go to a neighboring settlement on Easter morning, 1838. The day of their start seemed to be propitious, for good fortune attended them all the way to freedom. They traveled as they could till they reached Philadelphia, where "Bishop" Wyman sheltered them and obtained for them assistance from Abulitionist friends who sent them to Troy, New York, to a friend who lived in that city.

Moses was unable to find the Trojan, so he went to Schenectady and was employed for a brief time by Dr. Fonda, on his



*Blue Gate, Union College.*

farm, and soon after he was hired by Dr. Nott. When the "Fugitive Slave Law" went into effect, in 1850, Moses went to Canada for two years, upon the advice of Dr. Nott, who finally succeeded in purchasing his freedom, and Moses returned to Schenectady and remained with Dr. Nott till his death. He was the doctor's faithful nurse during his last illness and was at his bedside, the last person to speak to him before the end came.

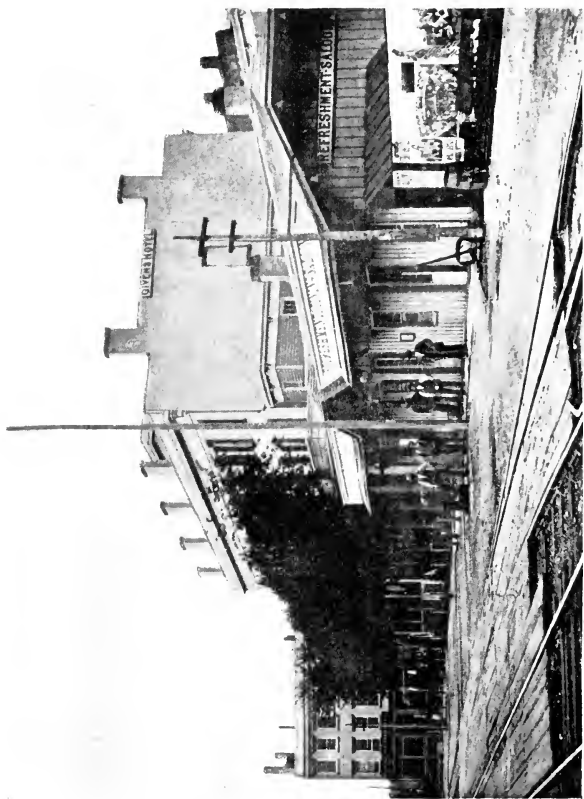


Moses is still living and his eighty-eight years are not heavy upon him. His mind, sight and hearing are as good as ever, his memory is wonderful and his happy, cheerful disposition is inspiring. He was always thrifty and after Dr. Nott's death he bought a horse and carriage and was in such demand by the old families of the city that he accumulated sufficient money to make him independent now in old age.

Besides driving Dr. Nott about in his famous three-wheeled chariot, Moses was very well known by the students, for when Dr. Nott wished to "see one of them in the library," it was Moses who took the message and sometimes brought back the student.



*Bowery Woods.*



*Given's Hotel and Cleary's Restaurant. Present Location Edison Hotel.*

## Chapter XVIII.

### HOTELS.



SCHENECTADY'S first house of entertainment for man and beast was the inn kept by Douw Aukes in 1663. Its location was on the south corner of State street and Mill lane.

In 1671 there were two inns in the village; one was kept by J. C. Van Slyck, a son of that Van Slyck who married a daughter of a Mohawk chief; and the other, by C. C. Viele, was the same as the one kept by Aukes in 1663. Aukes married the granddaughter of Viele. Either the license was in the name of the older man, Viele, in 1671, or else Aukes had given up the business and Viele was the inn-keeper in 1671. There was sharp rivalry between the two inn-keepers for, besides selling "fire-water" they acted as interpreters and Indian traders. Schenectady being a frontier post, the business of keeping an inn was an important and lucrative one for, when a thirsty Indian would "swap" a belt worth pounds, for a bottle of rum worth shillings, the balance on the ledger was all in favor of the inn-keeper.

The next house of entertainment was Clenche's Tavern, also on the square. This was the original inn kept by Aukes. The building was spared by the Indians during the massacre, out of regard for Van Slyck, but was destroyed by the great fire of 1819.

The most notable event in the history of this tavern was the reception and banquet given in honor of General Washington and four officers of Washington's army. In June, 1782, Washington was in Albany on business connected with the war and the opportunity of getting him to visit Schenectady was too good to be lost, so an invitation was sent and accepted. He and General Philip Schuyler drove over from Albany on June 30. They were

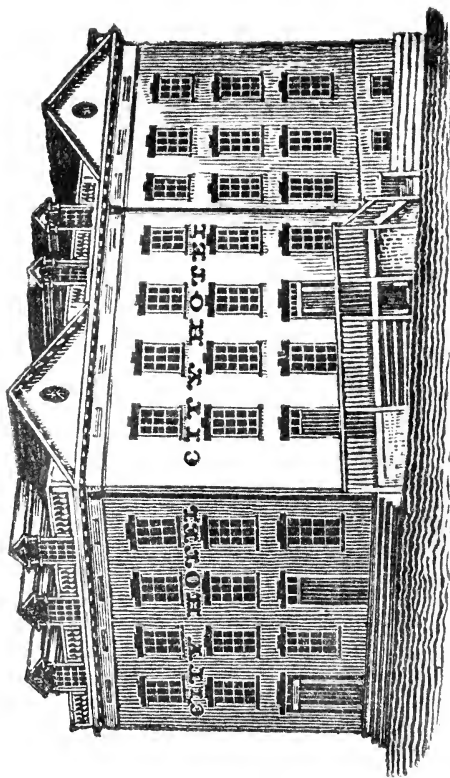


*Present Location Vendome Hotel.*

given a very formal and dignified reception by the military and civil authorities and then the banquet was served in the tavern kept by his old comrad in arms, Robert Clench. Clench was a drum-major in Braddock's army at Brandywine and Fort Duquesne at the same time that Washington—whose advice Braddock disregarded and so, was forced to accept defeat—was filling the important post of scout. Washington and Clench became intimate in their old army days and the latter's pleasure over the high position attained by his former companion in arms, and with the renewal of friendship, was unbounded. The Clenches in England and later in the Colonies and young Nation, were persons of mark in official and social affairs and the family was possessed of wealth.

Besides the military and civil authorities of Schenectady and men who were prominent in business and professional life, there were with Washington and Schuyler, Col. Frederick Visscher and Col. Abraham Wemple. To give especial honor to Colonel Visscher, who was in command of a regiment at the battle of Oriskany, Washington caused him to be seated on his right. An address was made to Washington to which he wrote a brief and vigorous reply.

Robert Clench's son, Thomas B. Clench, continued the occupation of his father. His first hotel was the Bradt building, No. 7 State street. Then he kept Clench's Hotel further up State street, which was later called the Sharratt Hotel. This famous old house stood on the site of the present Myers building on the North side of State street, the second building West of the canal. The Sharratt House was an old fashioned, low-studded building with the great timbers showing in the ceilings as was customary in old days. It was built of brick whitewashed on the outside. It was a first-class country tavern and very popular with the farmers of the county. It was kept by several men after the death of T. B. Clench, in 1830. In later days there was a sign in front of the house bearing the legend: "The Myer's House yard is Open Free, for Farmers, by Peter Magee." This was the



Leonard's City Hotel, Schenectady.

— 1831 —  
South-East Corner of State and Dock Streets.

hotel on Liberty street the entrance for teams being through the Sharrat House yard.

The Givens House was the most pretentious hotel in Schenectady and its location was the result of a heated contest between Mr. Givens and the merchants of lower State street.

About 1835, when the Schenectady and Utica Railroad was to be started, the people of the west end of the city, down Church street and Washington avenue way, wanted this road to follow the course through the city of the old Saratoga Railroad, which was up Railroad street, under State and Union streets where the County Clerk's office is, to the bridge across the river. Mr. Givens desired the company to run its tracks just where they are now, for he owned property there and wished to erect a hotel by the station. The fight was bitterly fought and triumphantly won by Mr. Givens. He then erected the fine hotel, shown in the reproduction of the architect's drawing of the railroad station, as it was first built.

The plan of the station was fine and the appearance dignified and impressive. The building across the tracks from the Givens House was later known as the Drullard House. It will be seen that both houses were connected with the station by a covered walk. The building, which was later the Drullard House, occupied the site of the Delaware and Hudson Railroad's tracks. The present corner, the site of Reynold's drug store, would be to the right of the Drullard House, where it is shown in the picture. The station and Givens House were burned in the winter of 1842-43. Mr. Givens immediately rebuilt the house shown in the other picture, which was later pulled down to make room for the Edison Hotel.



*Given's Hotel.*



## Chapter XIX. Reminiscences.

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TOM HARMON.



ABOUT sixty years ago, when the public hay market and scales were on the north-west corner of Union and Ferry streets, Tom Harmon, at one time a brilliant lawyer, who surrendered to the subtle power of King Alcohol, and so became reduced to gladly serving as weigh-master, was anxiously watching the approach of a load of hay, to be weighed upon the scales. His interest was not caused by official enthusiasm nor by curiosity in regard to the weight of the hay, but by the fact that, being "temporarily embarrassed," he had not yet absorbed his regular matutinal beverage. He knew that the six-pence, to be paid by the man in charge of the hay, would purchase a drink of whiskey. Oxen are proverbially slow; but this team seemed to creep. After Mr. Harmon had paced back and forth across the platform of the scales, for some time, he removed his hat, wiped the moisture from his forehead, and remarked to Mr. Joseph Carley, then a little boy: "My God Joe, how slow a thing is an ox!"

\* \* \*

"BILL," ANTHONY.

Reference has been made to the decidedly warm contests which took place in the Board of Supervisors and this suggests "Bill" Anthony, the political boss of the Second Ward, a ward which has been famous for many years as the home-ward of political bosses.

"Bill" Anthony was a hotel keeper at the corner of Ferry and Liberty streets, where Red Men's Hall now stands. At the

rear of the hotel, occupying the second floor of the building on Liberty street, was Anthony's Hall which was the only theatre in the city for many years, and the hall where the fashionable balls of the city were given, but more important still was the fact that it was political headquarters for the city and county. In the hall political meetings took place and in "Bill's" sanctum deals were made and schemes of a political nature hatched.

At this time there were five supervisors representing the city wards and five representing the five towns of the County. The one ambition of the city supervisors was to prevent the country supervisors from obtaining that which they wanted, and the energy of the country supervisors was exerted to block the efforts of the city supervisors. It made little difference what came up for consideration, it was surely opposed by the side which did not propose it, the towns pulling together without regard to party, but the chief point of contention was the equalization of taxes. The city tried to shove off a portion of its taxes upon the towns and the towns tried to make the city pay more of the county tax than was its share.

In those days, instead of there being city tax assessors, each ward had its assessors just as the towns do now and it was this fact which "Bill" Anthony used to keep himself in power. The taxes in the Second Ward were always the lowest in the city, thanks to the manner in which Anthony arranged things and this, of course, made the voters of that ward stick to "Bill" as closely as the modern office seeker sticks to the donor of patronage. With ten members in the board, the five city supervisors were able to block any action proposed and greatly desired by the country members. At that time, the greed for graft was not so prominent as it is now. The desire to control and to stand well with their constituents was the chief aim. The city supervisors were jealous of Anthony and the country supervisors took advantage of this to obtain control of the board when matters dear to their hearts came up. A deal was made with "Bill" that he should support the country members and that they should vote with him in city

matters. This worked successfully and only added strength to the enmity between the City and Towns.

One day, while the board was equalizing, the country supervisors, fearing the city bunch would offer and carry a certain resolution which would be objectionable, a scheme was evolved whereby the necessary quorum might be eliminated so that the resolution could not be voted upon. One of the members from the country asked to be excused. The chairman, then as now, desiring nothing better than to be "popular" with the members, readily granted the request. Soon, another member made a similar request. The late Charles P. Sanders, then a member of the board, was making a bluff at working on the books for equalization. When this second request to be excused was made, by prearrangement, he addressed the chair and said, that as the noise and confusion was so great the work of equalizing was interrupted and he would move that any member could be excused who wished to be. (The Board of Supervisors met at that time in the present Grand Jury room in the Court House.) The motion was carried and the country members started for the door, some of them getting out before the late Alexander Thompson, seeing through the scheme, locked it.

Mr. Sanders objected to any business being done behind locked doors. He and Supervisor McMillan started toward the door to unlock it and Mr. Thompson tried to prevent them. Mr. McMillan was a very tall and powerful man, so the "wrestle" for possession of the door was somewhat strenuous. In the heat of the contest Mr. Thompson called Mr. McMillan "a country calf." Mr. McMillan said: "You dare to call me a 'country calf.' I'll show you, you're going out of that window"—that window being twenty-five feet from the ground. He gathered Mr. Thompson up by the collar of his coat and the loosest portion of his trousers and swung him toward the window, declaring he'd throw him out if it killed him. Of course the other members in the room prevented it, but the incident shows that the supervisors did something more in those days than smoke cigars and relate funny stories.

## SERGEANT ROONEY.

Sergeant Rooney was one of those delightful Irish characters, who keep the heart warm and faith in human nature alive. He was as keen, as faithful to his duty; as witty and warm-hearted as generous and fearless.

One day a citizen complained at police headquarters that such a thing as a policeman was never seen in the part of the city where he resided; that, while that part of the city was orderly and seldom needed the presence of a policeman, he and the other tax payers, who helped support the police department, would like to see one around occasionally. Sergeant Rooney, with tightly shut lips and wide-open ears, took it all in and mentally vowed that Mr. Blank should soon be treated to the sight that he and the other tax payers craved. At eleven o'clock that night, Mr. Blank was aroused by a jangling at the door bell and a thumping on the door. He opened the window and in a sleepy voice, demanded to know who it was and what was the matter. Sergeant Rooney looked up and replied, "Oh, nothing much. I only wanted you to know there is a policeman to be seen in this part of the city. At twelve o'clock, Sergeant Rooney returned and repeated the performance; and this time, Mr. Blank requested the sergeant to go to that place which the Rev. Jonathan Edwards declared was paved with infants' skulls. He then returned to sleep, but was awakened each successive hour, till sunrise, when the sergeant went home, satisfied that the value of policemen in Mr. Blank's part of the city, would fall way below par.

\* \* \*

## THE FIRST PRIZE FIGHT.

The first prize fight of the Mohawk valley took place near the home of Sir William Johnson about 1765. Sir William had in his employ a large, ham-fisted Irishman named McCarthy, who was noted as the "champeen" bare-knuckle fighter of western New York. Sir William offered to back his big Irishman

against any man with sufficient courage to stand up against him. Major Jillis Fonda hearing of the challenge, felt his sporting blood begin to flow rapidly and, too, he believed that a "Van" was as good as a "Mc" with his manleys any day of the week or month. Major Fonda traveled forty miles to see John Van Loon, a very large and muscular Dutchman, to lay the case before him. Van Loon agreed for a ten pound note, to make the big Irishman eat dirt. A large number of the sporting gentry met to witness the fight. Pat swaggered about, trailing the tails of his coat for some one to tread upon. In fact he boasted and talked just as much and as long as the twentieth century fighter does, while Van Loon stood by thinking ponderous Dutch thoughts in the Hollandish language. The ring was formed and the fight began without that chief of fakirs, the modern referee, to sell his decision and spoil the sport. Pat fought well for a time, but gradually that Dutchman did things to him which were real rude and unkind. Pat ate dirt and was pounded into pulp between mouthfuls. Although history does not go further, it is probable that Pat gave up fighting, opened a saloon on the distiller's money and became a ward politician.

\* \* \*

### "BILLY" VAN HORNE AND THE COP.

When William J. Van Horne was mayor of Schenectady, there was one policeman of whom he was not certain. He wished to ascertain from personal knowledge, derived from experiment, just what this policeman, whose name was Wemple, would do, when a prisoner put up a fight. In imitation of that other wise man, of the East, Haroun Al Raschid, Mayor Van Horne disguised himself as a tough character, and, when he saw Wemple approaching, began to cut up "didoes" on the sidewalk near Van Horne hall. Officer Wemple remonstrated and ordered the amateur tough to move on. Instead of desisting and moving, the tough "sassed" the officer, and when Wemple took hold of the tough, he resisted; whereupon Wemple knocked him down, ham-

mered him into submission and started for the station house with him. Mayor Van horne was satisfied that Officer Wemple was all right; so he declared himself to Wemple. This irritated Wemple who hustled the Mayor along all the faster, while the Mayor continued to protest; "It's all right, I tell you. I'm the mayor, I'm Billy Van Horne. Let go, I tell you." He was taken to the station house and it was not till his disguise was removed, that his protestations of being "Billy Van Horne, the mayor," were found to be fact.

\* \* \*

#### MEANING OF "DORP" AND "CAMP."

All new arrivals in Schenectady hear and see in print the word Dorp used for Schenectady and many are curious in regard to its origin and meaning. Dorp is simply a Dutch word meaning "village." Schenectady has been called "The Village" for more than 200 years.

While nearly everybody in Schenectady knows that the land along the Mohawk river and the river road, or Mohawk turnpike, extending from near the Sanders mansion to the neighborhood of old Maalwyck, or the Toll place, is called "The Camp," but very few know why it is so called. In 1759 two Highland regiments under General Prideaux encamped upon the land between the Mohawk turnpike and the river for the purpose of keeping his soldiers from the temptations and gay life of Schenectady. The word, "camp," in time included all the land between the actual site of Prideaux' camp north to the "high bank." There is a popular belief that it was so called because the Indians encamped upon it, but this is not a fallacy.

\* \* \*

#### SHOPPING IN 1700.

The stores of the Seventeenth and the first half of the Eighteenth centuries were very simple and primitive affairs and the storekeeper frequently had other occupations. The store was

usually the front room of the proprietor's dwelling and the purchases were generally made at the front door or in the hallway, the customer seldom entering the room where the goods were kept. In the very early days the wheat and other salable products of the up-river farms, were brought to Schenectady in canoes and traded with the storekeepers for such goods and simple groceries as were in demand in those days. The Indian brought his stuff in the same manner. They brought, chiefly, fur pelts and occasionally a deer or bear cub which the settlers bought for fresh meat. As time went on and the products of the farms became larger, the wheat would be kept till the winter and then it would be brought to town on sleds. It was stored with the storekeeper who sold it to the best advantage in the spring, giving the farmer credit for the sale, less the commission, and the farmer would usually trade it out. There were not many money sales in those days at the stores. As a rule the people raised and fattened their own pork and beef, but in the case of persons who did not possess the land upon which to raise the corn, nor the means of purchasing from those who had it, the Indians' love of sweet and gaudy things would be taken advantage of. A quantity of sweet cakes would be baked and a few little bright colored pieces of cloth taken in a canoe up the river to a Castle, or one of the smaller Indian villages, and these would be bartered with the Indians for corn. Of course the white man obtained the better of the bargain, as he always has done with the Indian, and a canoe load of corn would be purchased with material which was probably not actually worth one-tenth as much as the corn.

\* \* \*

### "FIRE! FIRE!"

The first fire-fighting apparatus of Schenectady was purchased in 1764, when the Colonial Legislature passed a bill authorizing Schenectady to spend £82—\$205—for the purchase of a "fire engine," one of those pumping devices seemingly designed for breaking men's hearts and backs. This "fire engine" was not like

the more modern one of a hundred years later. The modern engine could suck its water from a well or cistern, but that of 1764 required two sets of fire workers; one to man the breaks and the other to carry water in buckets from the nearest supply and dump it into the tank of the engine. Why it would not have saved time and strength to throw the water immediately upon the fire, instead of into the tank of the "fire engine," is a mystery as great as Ann's age.

\* \* \*

#### A PROPHECY FULFILLED.

An odd fulfillment of a prophesy is told in the following reminiscence of 1745. Jan Schermerhorn was taking a stroll one evening, smoking his pipe and thinking of anything but Indians when he was suddenly grabbed from behind. The old man was speechless with fright till he found that his captor was his son-in-law, Klaus Viele, who had played a practical joke upon him. His terror immediately became rage and he exclaimed in Dutch: "You cursed son of the camp! It will come home to you." On the second day after the evening when the "joke" was played, Klaus was captured by Indians from Canada. It had indeed "come home to him." The Viele home and farm was on the southern bank of the Mohawk river, near the second lock of the Érie canal, about four miles west of the city. The Indians were first seen by a slave named Jack, who was plowing in a field not far from the house. He had sufficient self-possession not to let it be seen that he had discovered them, but continued the furrow and turned back toward the house. As soon as he reached the end of the furrow in that direction, he left the horses and ran at top speed for the house and gave the alarm. Cornelius Viele and the members of the family fastened the heavy doors and window shutters and made a determined resistance, one of the Indians being shot dead by Mr. Viele. Klaus, who was working in a field on an island, hearing the shot, started for his home and was captured. He was taken up the river two miles when they saw



Simon Groot and another man working in a field along the river. Both these men attempted to escape by swimming the river, but Groot was shot dead in midstream, while his companion escaped. After Klaus Viele and the Indians arrived in Canada, Klaus was whipped and forced to run the gauntlet. He was then adopted by the family of the Indian whom his father had killed and lived with them for four years. And so the prophesy was fulfilled.

\* \* \*

#### DOWN HILL.

According to tradition, the early settlers did not know anything about that portion of harness called the breeching. The manner of holding a wagon back on a down grade was by cutting a sapling with a large supply of branches and tying it to the back of the wagon to act as a drag. Every wagon was supplied with an ax and rope for this purpose.

\* \* \*

#### A FORGOTTEN FORT.

There was a small fort or blockhouse, built by the people of Schenectady in 1744, about which little is known. There seems to be no record of it in any of the histories, but Dr. Daniel Toll gives a description of it in an unpublished manuscript. He was born about 1776 and therefore, even if the little fort was not in existence in his boyhood, those who knew all about it and who helped build it were living and gave him an account of it, so he could write with authority. This fort was built at a place which the Dutch settlers called, "Schoullen Bosche" which means, "hide in the wood," and is now known as Schermerhorn's mill. It was made of massive timbers covered with plank four inches thick, thus making it proof against any rifle or musket bullet of those days. The first story was 12 feet square and 8 feet high. The second story projected over the first four feet on each of its four sides. There were two loopholes on each side and eight

in the projecting floor. These latter were to keep the attacking party from setting fire to the building. The lower floor had no openings of any kind, other than the door and this was massive and fastened inside by great bars of wood. The high roof was of so steep a pitch that the chance of a fire brand remaining upon it was slight. The purpose of this fort, or more properly blockhouse, was for temporary refuge for the nearby families upon sudden attack. The fort was moved several times. As the number of houses increased, so that their very number was a protection, the fort was moved to a more exposed and less thickly populated district.

\* \* \*

#### THE "POUND YORK."

When money values have been spoken of in this book as pounds, the Pound York was meant and not the Pound Sterling. The Pound York was nominally \$2.50, while the Pound Sterling, was nominally, as it is now, \$5.

\* \* \*

#### TIME, 4:19.

Schenectady has been the home of horse-men and races for 150 years. In the old days the races were between neighbors, usually those who were sufficiently well off to be able to keep driving horses. The course was generally on Front or Green streets, the stake usually being supper for "the crowd," paid for by the loser. Occasionally there would be a purse for a small amount. The races in summer were running races, but in the winter, when the ice of the river was in good condition, the horses were driven in front of sleighs. Stop watches were not a necessity with the great-great granddaddies of the present generation of Dorpians, for a quarter of a minute was sufficiently accurate, so the timing could be done with the old fashioned "turnip" or even a clock. The sport was probably more enjoyed than it is to-day for the contests were between acquaintances and being

devoid of the gambling element, it was sport. There is a tradition that the wealthier citizens, who owned "fast" horses of which they were especially proud, would have something painted upon the backs of their sleighs which the neighbors knew was a picture of the favorite horse and which strangers discovered was a horse, because the painting would be labelled with that fact.

\* \* \*

### THE ORIGINAL SHIP CANAL.

That the parent of the \$101,000,000 1000-ton barge canal between the Hudson river and the Great Lakes was born in Schenectady, the conception of the brain of a Schenectadian, is as unknown as are the inhabitants of Mars.

As early as 1821 Dr. Daniel J. Toll, a descendant of Karel Haensen Toll, one of the early settlers of Schenectady in 1684, began to write upon the subject of constructing a canal for sailing vessels and later steamboats, between the falls at Cohoes and Lake Ontario, by way of the Mohawk river, Oneida Lake and the Oswego river. Dr. Toll's idea as set forth by himself, will be easily comprehended by glancing at the reproduction of the map never before published.



Original Plan for using the Mohawk River as a Ship Canal.

To fully understand Dr. Toll's plan, it must be known that the Mohawk in 1821 was broken up by rapids, even more than it is now, at intervals of several miles, in some parts, and of shorter stretches in others. In his description, Dr. Toll says:

"The average height of the banks of the Mohawk river above low water is 12 feet and the fall at the rapids is from one to three feet, with a natural basin above the rapids of a depth of six to seven feet. At the head of each rapids construct a dam five or six feet high, which will give a slack-water basin of from 10 to 12 feet in depth, and still leave the banks sufficiently above the surface. The basins above the dams are to be connected with the basins below, by means of short canals starting above the dams and ending just below them in locks." Among the many advantages predicted by Dr. Toll were; "the possibility of journeying from New York to the village of Utica in 24 hours, whereas now the usual time of passage between Schenectady and Utica, by canal packet, is from 24 to 28 hours; great encouragement to agricultural, and manufacturing enterprise by reducing the cost and time of transportation from the farms and villages in the Mohawk valley to the great market of New York City." Dr. Toll was convinced that the Mohawk valley "would be turned into one continuous manufacturing village."

It is a rather odd fact that, three score and ten years after Dr. Toll drew his map, the Legislature of the State of New York, appropriated \$101,000,000 to carry out his ideas on a much grander scale.

\* \* \*

#### AN EARLY LYNCHING.

It is a rather odd fact that in 1756, in Schenectady, an Indian, known by the the name of "Jerry," was lynched. It was he who had betrayed General Braddock to the French and Indians, at the place of the historical "defeat," near Pittsburg, Pennsylvania. This "Jerry" was seen in Schenectady by some one who knew him. An alarm was given and the Indian was chased. He was found

in the evening, hiding in the cellar of Harman Van Slyck. He was taken several miles up the river, on the south side, and killed. His head was cut off and exposed on a pole, just outside the stockade along Ferry street. As soon as captured, the Indian began to sing his death song and continued to do so till he was killed.

\* \* \*

### WHIPPING POST AND STOCKS.

Before the Revolution, one form of punishment by the courts, for minor offences, was the whipping post and another was the stocks. If a man borrowed a neighbor's hen for the purpose of studying ornithological anatomy, he was whipped. If a party of young "bloods" gazed too deeply in the wine cup, and broke windows in the houses of the citizens, as a pastime, they were put in the stocks, where, with their ankles and wrists securely fastened between massive blocks of wood, they were jeered at and pelted with mud by the street urchins. The whipping post and stocks of Schenectady were situated by the "watch-house" which stood on the site of the first Dutch Church, near the bronze tablet, at the junction of State and Church streets. The greater number of culprits were the soldiers who occupied the barracks. It was one of the sights indulged in by many citizens, the going to the post to see a soldier whipped.

\* \* \*

### CHURCH MONEY.

Just after the Revolution, about 1790, there was a great scarcity of small change. This was not only an inconvenience, but also materially reduced the receipts when the collections were taken up in the First Dutch Reformed Church, the people actually feeling, or making it an excuse, that they had no change and could not afford to give a large piece of money or a bill. Now the Dutchman was the only rival of the Yankee in the matter of thrift and was almost the equal of the Scot. So the members of

the consistory filled and lighted their think-producers and puffed away in silence till one of the number suggested that the people deposit with the deacons of the Church their large bills and coin



*Paper Money Issued by the Dutch Church in 1790.*

and that the consistory should issue therefore notes of a value of one, two, three and six pence. The first issue was for £100 and the notes were printed, or at least some of them, by C. R. and G. Webster, of Albany.

\* \* \*

### EARLY BEVERAGES.

It is rather odd that in all of the many items of expense found in the old Dutch records, for liquor in Schenectady County, both public and private, not once is a charge for the national drink, "Schnapps" or Holland gin, recorded. The item is generally rum, sometimes wine, and once in awhile brandy.

### HISTORY OF THE DIKE.

The dike connecting Schenectady with the village of Scotia is two or three years the junior of the old wooden bridge which preceded the present decrepit, although not old, iron bridge. Up to 1811, the road from Scotia to the bridge was across the flat. When the Mohawk river was high and the flats flooded, there was no communication between Scotia and the city. Floods were not

so frequent nor so great in those days as they are now, nor did the river fall so low as it does now. Both of these conditions were due to the forests in the immediate vicinity of the river and up north toward the Adirondacks and south along Scholharie Creek. The woods kept the snow from melting as fast as it does now and also held sufficient moisture in the summer months to keep thousands of springs and scores of brooks and larger streams alive, which have disappeared, in the case of the springs, and are dry for a part of the year in the case of the brooks and streams. To return to the dike; the conditions were such and the traveling so great that in 1811, bids were advertised and the contract let to John Sanders, of Scotia, for \$1,500. The earth for the dike was scraped up from the flat land along the dike on both sides and this was topped with gravel. On the river bank, at the foot of the low bluff upon which the Sanders mansion stands, is a few hundred feet of a dike. This was built before the Revolution to protect the flat land from being washed away by the river. The dike built by Mr. Sanders was to be two feet higher than the "Deborah Glen dike," as it is known in the Glen-Sanders family. The dike was fenced on both sides, as the law required all property to be fenced in those days, and for many years thereafter, and on either side was a row of Normandy poplars. The dike was really most attractive in the days when these fine trees flourished. They were finally cut down as the shade prevented the sun from drawing the frost out of the ground, and in wet weather, their shade kept the mud from drying. There was no walk on the dike till 1867. Before that year, persons who crossed on foot walked in the middle of the road except when the mud was deep, then they skinned along on the fence and in time, boards were pulled from the fence in places to walk upon. In 1867, the Rev. Mr. Wilson, pastor of the Scotia Dutch Reformed Church, took up the matter of a plank walk and secured sufficient money for its construction. This walk was on the south side of the dike as was the narrow stone walk which was moved across the dike by the General Electric Company when it built the trolley

line. The dike was a part of the Mohawk Turnpike Company's property, as was also the old wooden bridge, till 1835, when the Schenectady and Utica Railroad was forced to buy it in order to obtain a right of way. The deed required the railroad company to keep the turnpike in repair for its entire length and this, it and its successor, the New York Central, did till about 1880, when the road was abandoned.

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### WASHINGTON IN SCHENECTADY.

The two stories of George Washington that are best known are the famous hatchet and cherry-tree story and the other equally famous one of the time when he was commander-in-chief of the Continental Armies, when, tradition has it, according to one historian of Schenectady, Washington and an acquaintance were walking on one of the streets of Schenectady, and were met by a negro slave who removed his hat and bowed profoundly. Washington returned the salute in kind and was questioned by his companion as to the advisability of recognizing a slave, whereupon Washington replied, "I cannot permit a poor negro to be more polite than I."

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### A COLONIAL FESTIVAL.

Next to New Year's day, Paus and Pinkster were the most popular and generally observed holidays of the old Dutch. Paus was Easter and Pinkster was Whitsunday. Pinkster was particularly a gala day, when young and old gave themselves up to jollity and boisterous fun. The joys of the day began in the morning with sports, out-of-door games and contests and ended, late at night, with indoor games and dancing. There was "egg butting," a custom that is observed to-day at the Capital in Washington, only it is called "egg rolling;" and "riding at the ring." The latter sport was probably a rural adaptation of the tournaments of the days of Chivalry. The necessary arrangements were a cord tied across the road, just above the heads of men on horse-



back. From this cord was suspended by a short string, a finger ring. Each horseman was provided with a short sharp-pointed stick about the size of a meat skewer, which was held between the first finger and thumb. The competitors were obliged to ride at full gallop under the cord and attempt to thrust their "lances" through the ring and carry it off three times. When one of the contestants had accomplished this, he was chased by all the other contestants. If he succeeded in reaching the goal, without being caught, he was the winner. The prize was the payment by the other contestants of the bill for himself and his "best girl" at the dance and supper to be given in the evening. If, however, he was caught, he was obliged to foot the bill for his captor and his "best girl." For a week before Pinkster, the inhabitants, black and white, began to make ready for the festival by erecting booths of boughs on Albany hill, from the most thickly leaved trees and bushes. (Albany hill is frequently referred to in old manuscripts and, although it is nowhere definitely fixed, it was probably at the top of the hill on State street, in the neighborhood of Hulet street.) In these rustic booths the tables were set with good things to eat and drink. Besides the "egg butting" and "riding at the ring" there were impromptu horse races, wrestling matches and occasional "scraps." The music for dancing was provided by the fiddle and jew's harp. Pinkster was a great occasion for the slaves. On this day they were granted unusual liberty to enjoy themselves according to their own ideas. One way of doing so was a dance which was no doubt a relic of one of the many religious dances brought from Africa by the captured slaves. The music was obtained from a huge drum-like instrument, four or five feet long and a foot in diameter, covered at either end by a tightly-stretched sheep's skin. This was held between the legs of the largest and oldest slave in the community. This drum he would beat with palm and fingers and all the time he would sing a wordless, droning song which, as the excitement increased, would become wild and wierd and was accompanied by muscular contortions, wagging and twisting of the head and rolling of the

eyes. One after another of the slaves would join in the dance, as the spirit moved him or her, to do so, till the musician was surrounded by a ring of black and yellow twisting, wriggling hysterical slaves who, for the time, were thousands of miles away in the heart of superstitious Africa. One by one they would fall to the ground exhausted when their places would be taken by others, who were just beginning to feel the moving of the spirit. It was not unusual for this wild dance to continue through two days.

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### BURNT AT THE STAKE.

So far as can be ascertained, only one person was ever executed in Schenectady by being burnt at the stake. This was in 1740, when a slave belonging to Simon Toll, was burnt for the crime of arson. The execution took place on the Albany turn-pike—now State street—at the foot of the hill.

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### THE NOVELTY WORKS.

The remains of the "Old Fort" is as popular a place for a Sunday afternoon walk for the boys and girls of to-day as was "Old Fort" itself for their parents. It was situated about a mile north from the center of the village of Scotia, between the Vly road and the Central-Hudson railroad. It was originally the home of Clausia Veeder, his wife and son Abe. Clausia was a veteran of the Revolution and a man of good family, he being one of the Veeders of Schenectady County. After the death of his wife, the house was permitted to go to rack and ruin and the habits of himself and his son followed the lead of the house. Clausia, the old soldier, was the *piece de resistance* of the Fourth of July parades for many years. While the prominent part he took in the celebration of the Nation's birth-day was a source of pride to the old man, it was, at the same time a period of distress, for he was always ill after it. The day before the Fourth the Com-

mittee in charge of the celebration sent some one to the Fort to give Clausia a scrubbing for the occasion. As this scrubbing occurred but once a year it was always too much for the old man and he was ill for several days thereafter. After the accumulations of twelve months had been removed and the old fellow's face freed from its stubby beard, he would dress himself in his Continental unifrom and, with his musket which had killed "Britishers," would head the procession in a carriage especially provided for him. He died at the great age of 101. During his last sickness a hen belonging to the estate chose one corner of the foot of the old man's bed for a nest in which to raise her brood of chicks. Biddy was undisturbed and a few days after the old man's death she strutted proudly forth with a family of yellow, downy chicks. Abe, the son, was well educated and taught school for a number of years. He was something of a dandy and particular about his manners. His coat and waistcoat buttons were made of silver quarter dollars and dimes polished till they shone. Several years before the death of his father he became eccentric and toward the last of his days he became decidedly "niffy" in person and habits. He prided himself upon his eccentricity and delighted in doing things as no one else ever did them. The idea of the Fort originated with Abe after the death of his father. He banked up the lower story of the house, cut holes in the upper floor walls to represent loop-holes, filled the house with Revolutionary arms and relics and curiosities and called it "The Fort." After the death of the old man he closed the lower floor of the house where he died, as he was afraid of his father's spook. Finally his fear became so great that he would not sleep in the house at all but constructed a hovel partly under ground where he lived. This contained more curiosities and was called by him "The Great American Novelty Works." This hovel was a rendezvous for local bums and tramps from afar whom he induced to stop there to protect him from "Thy father's ghost." These unwashed socialists slept on the ground floor and Abe slept in the attic which he entered by means of a trap-door. This door was

carefully closed down and then Abe made his bed upon it so that the spook guards below could not enter without awakening him. Just before and in the early days of the Civil War a Sunday visit to The Old Fort and The Great American Novelty Works was in vogue. The Central-Hudson ran a special train from the city to the place and later in the day carried them back. Among the sights of the place was the bed upon which his father died and the hen's nest filled with the broken egg shells. On the wall over the bed was daubed the legend; "The death bed of a hero." Each of the apple trees in Abe's orchard was provided with a long pole so that persons who wished to steal his apples could do so "without injuring the fruit or themselves with the stones thrown to dislodge it." In the potato patch were several potato diggers so that those persons who wished to steal his potatoes could "dig a hill clean instead of pulling up the vines and wasting half the potatoes in the hills." One of his fads was worn-out tin ware, specimens of which he annexed, begged or purchased in large quantities. As late as 1900 there was a pile of old tin ware five feet high and ten or twelve feet in diameter. Some of this he placed on top of a huge fire which melted the solder. This he gathered and sold and the tin was used to cover the leaking roof. Abe went to the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and remained for a week on a capital of \$5. He saw more and could converse more interestingly and intelligently than could half the persons who spent twenty times that sum for a week's visit. Before he went he acquired all possible information in regard to rules and regulations. The Centennial Exposition grounds were not open at night. At a certain hour signals were sounded when everyone was obliged to leave the grounds. Instead of going with the crowd, Abe secreted himself in a remote part of the grounds and was eventually found by one of the policemen and locked up for the night. This was just what he expected and wished for, as it would eliminate the necessity of paying for a lodging. Being a man of good education and giving a straight account of himself, the authorities sized him up as an eccentric

character and so treated him with kindness and respect. In the morning he was given an excellent breakfast and turned loose in the grounds. Thus, for the price of one admission to the grounds he had obtained two day's admission, a night's lodging and his breakfast. Abe worked this scheme successfully for two or three times, when the authorities "became wise" and turned him out at night instead of locking him up. Abe was a very cautious man, especially so with respect to the railroad cars, and yet, strangely enough, he was killed by the cars while walking on the tracks between the city and the Fort, in a dense fog, in 1891. Abe Veeder was a misfit citizen. He never found the particular niche that was especially hewed out for him in this life. Had he found it he would probably, with his birth and education, have been a prominent and useful citizen instead of a mere eccentric.

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#### ONCE A PRISON.

Van Slyck Island, just above the bridge between Schenectady and Scotia, was once the place of imprisonment for a number of French soldiers who had surrendered to General Prideaux at Fort Niagara.

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#### FREDERICK VISSCHER.

Colonel Frederick Visscher was not an early settler of Schenectady, but he and his family lived in Schenectady while the Revolution was in progress and after peace had been declared, so (he being a remarkable man in private life and as an officer of the Continental army, possessed of splendid courage) Schenectady may claim him as an adopted son. His life as a soldier was filled with stirring incident and tragedy. He had many terrible experiences and showed such determination and bravery, that some of them are recorded here. The incidents are based upon history, giving a general account of them and upon the more detailed verbal account by one of his sisters, many years ago to a descendant of the Glens and Van Rensselaers.

At the beginning of the Revolution Captain Frederick Visscher was in command of a company of militia upon which he was expending his best attention, so that they should be well drilled and ready for any emergency.

One day, at Caughnawaga, as Captain Visscher was drilling his men, Sir John Johnson was seen driving in his carriage rapidly upon the parade ground, toward the Captain and his men. Sir John was the degenerate son of fine old Sir William Johnson, who, had he lived, would doubtless have stood by the Colonies, but Sir John and "that infamous Butler" were Tories, who delighted in torturing and butchering their acquaintances and neighbors.

Sir John demanded; "By whose orders are these men assembled here?"

"By mine," replied Captain Visscher. Sir John then ordered them to disperse in the name of the King, but Visscher absolutely refused to permit them to do so. Sir John was enraged and, drawing his pistol, pointed it at Captain Visscher's head and shouted: "If you don't disperse those damned rebels I will blow your brains out." The last word was no more than uttered, than Sir John heard the lock of a rifle click and saw one of the soldiers take deliberate aim at him and then the other members of the company did the same. While Sir John was a bully with the instincts of a blackguard, he was not a coward, but these rifles were too much for him. He put up his pistol and drove away with curses upon the rebels and their cause.

When he had been promoted to the command of a regiment, Colonel Visscher was ordered to the relief of Fort Stanwix, later Fort Schuyler and now the city of Rome. After the fight, hearing that the enemy was approaching his home, he sent his wife and children to Schenectady and was making arrangements for moving his mother and two sisters, when the mansion at Caughnawaga, was attacked by six Indians. The home was so well and hotly defended by Colonel Visscher and his two brothers, that the Indians withdrew. At the break of day they returned in

greater numbers, broke down the barricaded door and drove the family, fighting, to the attic where the three brothers fought the Indians hand-to-hand. While this terrific fight was going on, Mrs. Visscher and her two daughters tried to escape down the stairs. One of the Indians knocked Mrs. Visscher senseless with the butt of his musket, but the young ladies were allowed to reach the yard unmolested. There, one of them was stripped of her bonnet and shawl and ordered to "go." She needed no second bidding, but ran to one of the great out-of-doors brick ovens, which were much in use in those days, and hid in it. The other sister hid in some bushes. Soon they saw the Indians leave the house and then one of them returned and re-entered it, and, a moment later joined the others who all went away. A few minutes later the sisters saw that the mansion was on fire.

To return to the fight in the attic: One of the brothers was killed and the other jumped out of a window and was killed by the fall and later scalped. The colonel was knocked out by two blows from a tomahawk and his scalp was torn from his head. Colonel Visscher was a man of great vitality. He soon regained consciousness and hearing the Indians leaving the house, he raised himself on his elbow, to see what had been the fate of his family. He heard one of the Indians returning up the stairs, so he laid down to feign death, but the agony of his terrible wounds caused a twitching of the muscles. The Indian seeing that he was still alive, drew his knife across Colonel Visscher's throat twice and then joined his companions.

This was the Indian whom the young ladies saw re-enter the house. It happened that Colonel Visscher wore a red and a black neck-cloth, the black one being the outer. When the Indian slashed his throat he thought he saw blood flowing from the wound, so he departed, but it was this red neck-cloth, the actual wounds from the knife being painful, but not serious. By the time the Indians had disappeared, the colonel saw that the house was on fire. The operation of scalping was a horrible one. A cut was made on a level with the top of the ears completely

around the head, an edge of the scalp was raised and taken between the teeth and torn away from the head. The shock to the nervous system was so great that scalping usually caused death, even when there was no other injury.

Notwithstanding his condition Colonel Visscher immediately began to remove the body of his brother from the burning house and to save his insensible mother. He succeeded in getting her into a chair, in dragging it and her to the door of the house, when his agony caused him to faint. By this time help had arrived and they were both saved from the flames, but not till the chair in which Mrs. Visscher laid was on fire. The Colonel, his mother, two sisters and the bodies of his brothers, were taken down the river by a faithful slave, in a canoe to Schenectady. Incredible as it may seem, the colonel recovered and lived till 1809. Several years after this frightful event, two Indians on their way to Albany, stopped in Schenectady, one of them being the Indian who had tomahawked and scalped the colonel and, supposedly, cut his throat. This devil had the nerve to try to see Colonel Visscher, as he would not believe that he was still living. When the colonel heard of it, he was with difficulty restrained from killing the Indian, who immediately left for Albany with his companion and never returned to Schenectady during Colonel Visscher's life. The negro slave who took the Visschers in the canoe to Schenectady, was given his freedom and was presented with a handsome horse by his grateful master, Colonel Visscher.

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#### NEW YEAR'S GREETING.

The old Dutch greeting on New Year's day, translated into English, was "I wish you a happy New Year. Long may you live, much may you give, happy may you die and inherit the Kingdom of Heaven by and by."

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